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ABSTRACT

This list of novels and non-fiction works for junior high school students and teachers has been put together over a number of years and is intended for use in conjunction with Alberta's Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum Guide (1987) and with classroom texts. Following a foreword, the document is in six sections: (1) "Introduction"; (2) "What Is Young Adult Literature?" (alternative approaches to teaching literature; how to promote response to literature in the classroom); List for the Classroom" (special considerations, e.g., stereotyping, pulp novels, ethnocentrism, etc. briefly discussed); (4) "Responding to Literature"; (5) "Activities for Teaching Non-Fiction and Fiction"; and (6) "Annotations" (listing 61 annotations for both novels and non-fiction titles by grade and genre--historical fiction, mystery, non-fiction, realistic fiction, and speculative fiction). Since young adult literature is a relatively new literary category, all of the books were published in the last half of the 20th century. Annotations provide a summary of the plot, along with brief critical commentary, name of publisher, publication date, International Standard Book Number, and related resources. Four appendixes contain material on genre definitions, challenges to book selection "censorship," a bibliography providing background articles on specific genres--19 references, and reviewing sources (Canadian, U.S., and British). (SR)

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Jr. High Novels & Non Fiction

1990

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LIST

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And to all the readers, pilot teachers and students who carefully read the thousands of books that were submitted by publishers, our thanks.

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FOREWORD

This list of novels and non-fiction for junior high school students and teachers has been put together over a number of years, and reflects the best resources that are currently available.

The list should be used in conjunction with the ***Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum Guide*** (1987) and the texts you are using in your classroom. To use this list as a guide for the purchase of other resources for your school, please consult the section that describes the selection process plus appendices that describe some selection tools. Each of the titles is annotated and should help you in selecting resources for your classroom. If your school or school district has not established a policy for handling concerns by community members there is a section in the appendix that deals with the issue. If you are interested in using the "Response to Literature" approach in your classroom there is a section describing this approach.

We hope that this listing will be supportive of your teaching style and that the titles listed will provoke thoughtful discussion among your students.

Introduction

The main reason for studying novels and non-fiction in junior high is to foster a love of reading. However, the "Novel Study" can become an exercise in repeating the correct answers to teacher-prepared questions. This approach can stifle understanding and enjoyment rather than encourage it. As a result some students may come away with only a superficial understanding of the work, and with a sense that literature can only be enjoyed by a highly educated few. One of the goals of junior high language arts is to encourage "Lifelong reading for enjoyment, appreciation and information," in all students (***Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum Guide***).

To encourage the appreciation and love of good literature, the primary function of any book selected for this annotated list must be to entertain. If literature fails to provide enjoyment, it does not matter how well it is written. Junior high students, like all readers, are engaged and entertained by literature that is written at a level they can comprehend, about topics that they can appreciate and understand from their own experience. Good young adult literature offers junior high students opportunities to read for enjoyment.

Novels and non-fiction are also important resources that students can use to understand the world around them. Therefore, one of the basic values that the selection committee looked for in the novels on the list was their ability to expand the student's vision. The experience of reading good literature can stretch students in a variety of ways, from showing them the power and beauty of language, to challenging them to think about the nature of good and evil.

What Is Young Adult Literature?

Young adult literature (both fiction and non-fiction), as the term suggests, is literature written for, or at least appropriate for adolescent readers. As a literary category, it has a relatively short history. However, the '60s, '70s and '80s have seen a virtual explosion in the number of titles and range of topics available to young adult readers, particularly in the areas of fiction. The number of non-fiction titles has been limited, but in the last decade new material has been written.

Adolescent literature did not begin a few years ago with S.E. Hinton's ***The Outsiders***, or Paul Zindel's ***The Pigman***, but rather in the '40s with Maureen Daly's ***Seventeenth Summer*** or, if you stretch the definition of literature, in the '30s with the Nancy Drew formula books. From these early books it would have been difficult, however, to predict the subject matter, the points of view or the literary quality of the novels that have appeared in recent years.

In the early novels there were established limits for the writer to follow. The emphasis in these books was that life is rewarding for the individual who takes school, work and sports seriously, without questioning the rules of society.

Adolescent novels of the '40s and '50s, and most of those written before 1965 were touched with an idealism that did not reflect the true nature of what was happening to young people. But the '70s brought change. The adolescent novels produced were interested in touching the reality of young people's lives, and talking directly to their readers. This trend has continued; one now finds novels that provide a positive literary experience, well worth the time spent reading.

It is difficult to characterize the good adolescent novel. Perhaps it is one that does not allow its readers to feel comfortable and complacent; it is engaging and asks us to see ourselves and others a little more perceptively. In that sense, the good novel leads us to see what is true and may even permit us moments of stark revelation about what is in us. It brings readers to an awareness that not all things are right or just or good, and offers us a vision of what the world might be.

Literature and the Young Adult Reader

Young adult literature provides students with an opportunity to develop both their reading skills and their appreciation of literature. As students move through different levels of appreciation, they develop skills that increase their pleasure in and understanding of good literature. The more experience young people have with reading, the more discriminating they become. They begin to develop this critical sense of literature at about the same time they develop it in life—at the end of childhood and the beginning of their teen years. Their reading takes on a more definite purpose. They read to find out about themselves, not simply to escape into someone else's experience for a few pleasurable hours. On the one hand this egocentric reading leads adolescent students to look for stories of lives as much like their own as possible. On the other, it can open up another side of life for the curious reader. Teenagers seek out books that present lives totally different from their own. They look for anything bizarre, unbelievable, weird or grotesque: stories of strange happenings and horrors. Yet, whatever they read, their purpose is primarily one of finding themselves and their place in society.

As teenagers move from this egocentric level, they look at a larger circle of society and respond to the questions authors raise about conformity, social pressures, justice and other aspects of human relationships. These topics provide a valuable opportunity for students to share their differing interpretations of a work, as they bring their own experiences into play. Reading at this level allows teenagers to focus on their own psychological needs in relation to society, and gives them a sense of the role they can and do play.

Perhaps because of these developmental needs, some common themes persist in good adolescent literature. One is the theme of essential aloneness, that each of us is a separate individual who may need to lean on others, but who ultimately stands alone. Of course this very aloneness is what drives us to relate to others. Thus the need for love and companionship is another strong theme in teenage novels. Then, perhaps because of the tension between solitude and relationships, we also search for something to believe in, some purpose or reason that gives validity to our existence. Many teenage novels are centred on the themes of hope and truth-searching. Another important theme, but one that is all too often absent in teenage novels, is our need for laughter. Our ability to laugh openly and heartily with others and at ourselves takes the edge off other, more serious themes.

Non-fiction

Non-fiction is a familiar genre for adults, as non-fiction works play an important role in our everyday lives. In junior high, students should also come to enjoy reading non-fiction and appreciate its place in their lives.

Non-fiction is not simply a book of facts, such as one would use in the science lab or at the atlas table. It is more than a reference book comprising the most accurate information in a distant and impersonal style. Non-fiction explores a topic in depth, with sensitivity and with a point of view that shows the author's ability to discover, explore, develop the subject, convey its meaning and finally, evaluate it. This means, for example, that by reading Janet Foster's, ***Journey to the Top of the World***, one can learn a great deal about the Canadian arctic. We read it not only for information, but for its illumination of human behaviour, and for its author's ability to bring events to life.

Whether it is natural history, human history or the abstractions of mathematics, good non-fiction requires as much craftsmanship as any imaginary narrative. This craftsmanship involves not only the technical skills of good writing, but a number of special competencies as well. Like fiction, non-fiction requires a form and a voice that will enlarge the reader's experience, deepen it, intensify it. It must avoid glib generalizations, offering instead a concrete focus on the topic, supported by carefully chosen material. A skilled non-fiction writer is able to bring the subject to life and invites the reader to participate in the author's enthusiasm for the topic.

Careful use of words, variety in sentence rhythm, links between paragraphs and an overall coherent structure, are as important to good non-fiction as they are to fiction. The style of writing should be neither didactic in tone, nor dry and dusty in language and pattern. Added to the usual subtleties of style is the challenge of using technical terminology. The primary quality of the text must be clarity, for without it the book fails in its main purpose of informing young readers. When style and clarity are the essential ingredients, reading the text becomes a literary experience rather than just another school assignment.

Another essential requirement of good non-fiction for children and youth is the use of illustrations. They serve a variety of functions: they can give information that would be difficult to present otherwise; they can combine with the text to present a visual whole; and they can create an emotional tone that

words alone cannot achieve. Illustrations range in style from the most traditional to the most modern, from the abstraction of graphs to realistic photographs, from subtly exact drawings to imaginative cartoons. But the one quality they must possess in common is clarity. When illustrations are used they must also enter into a partnership where pictures and text match each other in information, format and mood. Neither should stand alone; together they should make the reading of a non-fiction book an eye/mind experience that gives the subject a kind of tangible life of its own and invites enjoyment and curiosity.

Developing a List for the Classroom

Like any relatively new field, young adult literature seems to be in a constant state of change. The rapid growth of young adult literature has not been in numbers alone. Over 50 years, it has evolved from the simplistic adventures of the Hardy Boys and Nancy Drew to novels that deal with growing up, the environment, nuclear war, as well as adventure, discovery and love. The range of literary genres is as wide as that of literature for adults.

Since there has been such an explosion of work in such a short period, the discerning reader must search long and hard to find the best quality buried under the mass-marketed pulp and problem novels so readily available on booksellers' shelves. Teachers encountering this vast selection may often feel that they are better off teaching the works they read when they were in school. Fortunately, there are tools available that make the task of selecting and teaching young adult literature a little less formidable.

Michele Landsberg's ***Guide to Children's Books*** is perhaps the most important of these tools. Landsberg not only lists quality children's books, but also discusses the place of humour, the importance of a sense of identity, the role of fantasy, time travel and styles of adventure. Her discussion of bias in young adult literature is particularly useful. In ***Thursday's Child***, Sheila Egoff takes a more scholarly approach to the history and importance of children's literature. Although Egoff discusses individual books, she is more concerned with a critical understanding of the titles in relationship to others in the same genre. She also places greater emphasis on the history and development of the various genres.

The annotated list contained in this document is another tool designed to assist teachers in the task of selecting good young adult literature for their students. The list is divided into grades and then subdivided into genres (genre definitions are given in Appendix A). This allows teachers to begin using the list in a systematic manner. The annotations are designed to help the teacher narrow the choices without having to read every work listed.

The following criteria, used by the selection committee for this list, may also be useful in developing a list for the classroom. The works selected should:

- cover a wide range of reading levels within each grade;
- include both fiction and non-fiction;
- promote tolerance and understanding of different races, ages, individuals and cultures;
- recognize and relate to upper elementary and senior secondary literature;
- include a blend of genres within grade levels to reflect current trends in literature.

In addition to these criteria and, of course, literary considerations, the committee agreed on a set of criteria based on community standards. These special considerations are described in the following section.

Special Considerations

Classroom reading lists should be developed with consideration for the values and special characteristics of local communities. The following are some areas teachers may wish to consider.

Stereotyping

The committee agreed that contemporary realistic novels should be free of stereotyping. Instances of stereotyping may be found in historical novels but these often reflect the attitudes of the time. The annotations make note of the problem so that teachers can take steps to prepare suitable material when introducing the book.

Language

There was agreement that unless gutter language and blasphemy are **essential** to the characterization, the book would not be recommended. Most communities will accept "gutter language" when it enhances characterization, but will not accept blasphemy. "Technical" language, when used, should enhance comprehension and not detract from the reader's understanding and enjoyment of the work. This is especially important in non-fiction, where the basic goal is to impart knowledge to the reader.

Sex

As young adult literature often deals with growing up, it is obvious that sex will be depicted in a few of the stories. It was decided that if the act was not **graphically** described or **sensationalized** and was an important part of the novel, it would be acceptable. Some novels have characters talking about having sex or wondering what the experience would be like; this is the reality of today's junior high students. These situations have been annotated carefully to alert the teacher.

Factual Distortion/Inaccuracies

The committee decided to avoid choosing novels with factual inaccuracies, since these texts are used in a controlled learning environment. Some speculative novels have elements that are **factually** inaccurate but which, in the world created by the author, are logically consistent and central to the plot development and character motivation. These kinds of books have been included in the list.

Pulp Novels

The committee decided that this type of novel has no place in a recommended reading list. Written to a formula, they often contain blatant forms of sexual, age and lifestyle stereotyping (intelligent girls are not good looking, protagonists are middle class, etc.). More importantly, these stories do not introduce the students to quality literature.

Problem Novels

Because there are numerous "pulp" problem novels it was necessary to cull those of poor literary quality. Problem novels deal with such issues as drug abuse, teenage violence and the awakening of sexual interest. Unfortunately, many do not rise above the stereotyped view of teenagers in relationship to these issues. The few problem novels selected have been carefully annotated to alert teachers to potential concerns within the students' community.

Reading Levels

The committee decided not to use measures such as the Fry Scale or the Fog Index to ascertain a reading level. The committee felt that interest in the content and literary merit could be used to motivate students to read beyond their presumed capabilities. At each grade level, titles of various reading levels are included.

Ethnocentrism

In the final selection, an attempt was made to ensure that world perspectives were integrated into the list in an equitable manner. The committee believes that, taking into consideration the preponderance of North American and British titles available, there is a balance of viewpoints presented.

Classics

Classic novels, such as those by Dickens, Verne or Kipling, are written in language that today's young reader would not understand without extensive direction from teachers. Teachers may still wish to use such classics and they should feel free to do so if their students are capable and interested. These traditional classics have not been listed. However, an effort was made to list "classics" within each genre.

Magic

There was a recognition that magic is an integral part of some young adult literature. The committee defined magic "as the use of means (ceremonies, charms, spells) that are believed to have supernatural power to cause a supernatural being to produce or prevent a particular result; such as rain, death or healing considered not obtainable by natural means." This also includes the control of natural forces by such direct actions as rites or the manipulation of materials or words that are considered supernaturally potent. Because community standards very from location to location, we recommend that teachers carefully consider material that employs magic and balance it against the standards of their particular community.

Responding to Literature

"An essential part of any experience with literature is the response that the reader makes to the literary text during and after reading. As readers are drawn into the world of the literary work, they think and feel about the characters, the situation and the language. They may understand, or they may fail to understand. They may like the literary work or they may dislike it. Sometimes they may appreciate it. All of these thoughts and feelings represent their response to literature in either its spoken or written form."

(***Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum Guide***)

What Is Response to Literature?

Response to literature, at its broadest, refers to the whole spectrum of thinking, feeling and acting that occurs related to reading. Response begins during the introduction to the text, through reading, re-reading and after reading. It provides opportunities for readers to share their thoughts and feelings, their predictions, their interpretations, their questions, their associations and their hypothesis about form and it shows students that these aspects of reader response are important for reading literature.

Teachers familiar with the research and curriculum developments in the field of response theory find that it enables them "to...

- redefine literature and our teaching of it;
- select better literary works and hence a wider range of literary experiences;
- have students read more widely and deeply in the literary field;
- deepen students' enjoyment of their reading experience as we deepen their insights and sensitivity to text;
- broaden and diversify classroom activities which support the processes of enquiry, probing, exploring and extending the meaning of the text;
- reconceptualize teaching, learning and evaluation in the English program."

"However, teachers who make the departure from the traditional 'analytical' approach, with its naming of the parts, its comprehension questions and other paraphernalia, find new excitement and satisfaction in their classrooms. The 'albatross' of teaching literary criticism has been lifted from their shoulders. Their voices no longer dominate the classroom. The questions students raise become the new agenda; the suggestions students make guide the follow-up activity; the insights students engender direct the focus of the enquiry. As Margaret Meek has observed, 'Children offer us the evidence we need but we so rarely see it for what it is.'"

(***Response to Literature***,
Ontario Minister of Education 1987)

Traditional assigned reading (e.g., by chapter), followed by questions—often literal in nature, often answered in writing for homework, and often corrected by the teacher for marks—is a methodology to be rethought in view of the nature and needs of the learner, the nature and needs of a changing society, and the nature of knowledge and the learning environment. These are discussed in "Developmental Patterns in Adolescence" ***Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum Guide***.

The advantages to the traditional approach are primarily for the teacher: accountability, classroom control and the development of common ground—providing that all students do the assigned work.

The disadvantages of this traditional approach are:

- Successful readers are punished—held back as they read.
- The focus is on details not essential to good readers who are already focused and comprehending.
- Reading is artificially divided into sections that successful readers do not need and that may frustrate them.
- The questions are most often frustrating and confusing to students who have read ahead, or who predict, or who digest text in larger chunks. They are forced to backtrack and to ignore the additional information they may have encountered or surmised if they want to give "correct" answers. These students traditionally also crave acknowledgment of the correct answers and so must, therefore, compromise their learning.

Fortunately, the kinds of activities that we choose, the types of experiences we structure for students, and the ways in which we organize and implement literature study can be refocused. The following are examples of how you might undertake to do this.

Instead of...	Why not try...	And then try...
class reading one selection together	having groups read different material OR having class read one selection independently and keep reading journals	group presentations to each other forming groups as students finish reading, to process experiences and understanding
using monitored study guides	using guided response journals OR using teacher student response journals	using open ended response journals
placing focus on plot	shifting focus to character, theme or form	focusing on style

The traditional approach to literature asked students to respond to both fiction and non-fiction in similar ways. That is, they were asked to read for content or information. The response to literature approach shifts the emphasis from information to enjoyment or aesthetic appreciation. Although this approach is especially suited to fiction, it is also appropriate for non-fiction. Most contemporary non-fiction for young adults is written and packaged to engage the attention of adolescent readers. Response to literature offers students an opportunity to analyse the presentation, format and illustrations in non-fiction, factors that not only convey information, but enhance the reader's enjoyment.

Framework for Literature Study

In addition to the focus on responding during and after reading, an increased emphasis is being placed on the pre-reading phase of reading. Development and selection of strategies to assist readers in better understanding and appreciating what they read is essential when teaching novels and non-fiction. The following tables describe some activities you may use in developing a plan for studying novels in your classroom. The concepts on the left hand side of the following tables are taken from the ***Junior High School Language Arts Program of Studies***.

CONCEPT	ACTIVITY
24. Appropriate prereading strategies can assist readers to understand what they are reading.	Individuals, pairs or groups respond to reading material in written and spoken forms. They focus on what they think they know about the topic, theme, author, form, style and or literary tradition. Their purpose is to shape and or access a strategy, develop an appropriate attitude to the reading and create a framework within which comprehension can be sorted out.

To do this, students will **READ, LISTEN** and **VIEW** for information; they will **WRITE** and **SPEAK** as they learn.

CONCEPT	ACTIVITY
25. Selection of appropriate strategies during reading can assist readers to understand what they are reading.	Individuals prepare and share written and verbal responses to their reading. They record, analyse and discuss strategies they try, attitudes that form and then re-form, and understanding that evolves as comprehension takes shape.

To do this, students consider how successful readers read, what other readers see when they read and where to search for clues that aid interpretation. They will **SPECULATE, ANALYSE**, and **RETHINK**.

26 Appropriate strategies following initial reading can assist students to respond to and reflect on what they have read.	Individuals, pairs and groups respond to reading material in written and verbal forms. They focus on and explore further opinions they have formed concerning topic, theme, author, form, style and or literary traditions.

To do this, students will be using skills associated with plot and character, with interpretation of symbols and metaphor, and with their assessment of what the literature means to them and to others.

Alternative Approaches to Teaching Literature

Feeling comfortable about the purpose and intent of all phases of the reading and response process is an important consideration when studying novels. It is often helpful to approach a theory from several angles and from alternative viewpoints. This chart suggests several ways to use the response to literature approach with your students.

	BEFORE reading	DURING reading	AFTER reading
TRADITIONAL APPROACH	ASSIGN	READ digest	ANSWER context questions
RESPONSE TO LITERATURE	STIMULATE INTEREST	MAKE MEANING	APPLY UNDERSTANDING
Focus	preparation what students already know about...	process how students relate to...	product what reflections, connections and extensions can be made, and why.
Interest Learning	stimulate how to focus and stimulate interest to read	maintain how to read	translate as understanding how to express understanding of what is read
Operations (what the reader is thinking and doing)	focus connect	refocus affect	apply by comparison, contrast, and analysis reflect
Sources	related material and experience	reading strategies	conclusions, interpretations, synthesis
Strategies	choose preparation foundation	experiment infrastructure construction	evaluate decoration finishing off for
Teacher Purpose	focus, balance, equalize	assist in diagnosis	develop appreciation for authors' crafts and human attitudes

What we do to organize the reading experience for students has a profound effect not only on their appreciation, comprehension and understanding of the work but on the development of attitudes and skills that will direct reading habits throughout their lives. All approaches offer assistance to the teaching of literature. It is important to assess the students' interests and skills, your interests and skills as a teacher, and the attitudes and values of the community. Once these have been considered, the techniques that are selected will provide a solid foundation for all activities undertaken in the classroom.

What About the Response of Others?

While SHARING personal and critical response among students (and teachers) is an important part of the learning process, TEACHING interpretation and the critical response of others may limit students' personal responses. All artists—such as script writers, actors, editors, designers, producers and directors—who interpret written prose, impose their values on the original piece of literature. When discussing literature with your students the interpretation by these mediators should be pointed out. These interpretations are simply that—interpretations that should not be viewed as of greater significance than the students' interpretations.

Of greatest importance for students is a confirmation that their own images and sounds are also valid, if perhaps for different reasons. Students should appreciate that all readers approach reading from different perspectives and for different purposes.

If all one is seeking is an understanding of plot and motivation, then a film can make these accessible. However, even the events in a novel and a movie do not always correspond. In fact, film makers often re-order events, since viewers respond differently and process information differently from readers (who have the luxury of stopping to think and rethink or go back to reread passages for more information and additional clues).

We do not intend to discourage use of films, video and audio versions of literature, but wish to focus their use on the concepts for which they are appropriate and as means to develop skills in those areas.

But viewing (for meaning) ≠ reading (for meaning).

Access to media may discourage lifelong reading—why read the book if you can see the film?—and, ultimately, will also discourage film appreciation. Just as Louise Rosenblatt categorizes reading as efferent and aesthetic, viewing and listening can occur for information or for enjoyment. Too great an emphasis on the efferent—information—will weaken a student's ability to focus on the aesthetic. Teachers who use audio, video and film versions of literature must attend to listening and viewing concepts, exercising skills that are related to reading but which ARE NOT READING SKILLS.

How to Promote Response to Literature in Your Classroom

Two classroom strategies growing in popularity and effective use for promoting response to literature are the regular and routine use of:

a) Reading Response Journals and
b) Listening Logs.

Reading Response Journal

The reading response journal is a notebook (or writing folder) in which students record a "measure" of their enjoyment of a book self-selected for silent reading under the teacher's guidance or provision. After reading a unit, a chapter, or the whole book, students record their personal responses to the reading experience.

During the initial trial period, the teacher provides appropriate directions, instructions and guidelines for a particular class, group or for individuals in the class. Teachers decide during the phase-in period whether to arrange writing partners or small groups to share, prepare or support in general the written response students choose to make.

Listening Log

Listening logs are used in conjunction with the teacher's daily reading aloud from a literary work not otherwise available to the students. There are as many variations to the listening log as there are to reading response journals. By using the following procedure teachers will readily get a handle on their own adaptations of the basic techniques. The text chosen to be read aloud will likely determine the type and frequency of entries to be made.

Both of these classroom routines acknowledge the centrality of literature and enable the English teacher to deepen the authentic and personal response of every student by guiding them into wider reading and more reflective writing. However, as with other innovative developments, there is always the danger of a superficial adoption of what appears to be a good idea and becomes a time-filling practice.

Therefore, it is suggested that the teacher begin with an introductory procedure to encourage student response in spontaneous but reflective writing. A 60- or 90-minute period is better than a 40-minute period—which tends to rush the procedure—but both longer and shorter periods have been used. It is also helpful to use a very short story. Picture books lend themselves to this activity because the text of the story is usually not too long. Such stories as Jane Yolen's ***The Seeing Stick*** and Molly Bang's ***Dawn*** are ideal. The following procedure, developed by Thompson (1984), is taken from ***Response to Literature*** (Ontario Minister of Education 1987).

Instructions to the Class

"I am going to read you a short story. As you listen I want you to reflect on what's going on in your mind. In order to help you, I will read the story in short units and then pause to let you write. These questions I put on the blackboard are not to be answered one by one. They are suggestions only. They will serve as a guide to what you may write about. Remember this is not a test nor do I want you to work hard or think hard. In fact my interest is in what comes naturally to your mind as you listen. Other students have found this activity easy and enjoyable. It should be effortless for you. Are there any questions before I begin? The questions I have written on the blackboard are:

- What's going on in your mind?
- What pictures occur in your head?
- What feelings do you experience?
- What do you expect to happen?
- What questions occur to you?
- What are you thinking about?"

As I read the first portion of the text a hush falls over the classroom. Already the narrative is casting its magic spell over their minds and hearts. You can sense it physically and emotionally. When I reach the end of the unit I simply say, "Write."

There are hesitations, blank stares, then a gradual immersion into thinking, composing and writing. The pens and pencils move line by line across their pages. Heads are lowered except to check the blackboard from time to time. Some stop writing far sooner than others. They look around. Others are still engrossed. They stare some more then start writing again.

One teacher observing the procedure noticed that I allowed six full minutes for writing this first entry. Nearly all have stopped writing and are waiting while others are trying to complete what is occurring to them.

Because of time I reluctantly break in on the one or two who are still composing. I begin again reading aloud by repeating the last few lines. Then I read the next unit, stop, and they recommence the writing. As we proceed through this story I find I lengthen the units read in one stretch. I began with one page at a time but now I'm reading three pages which is in keeping with the narrative structure to some extent.

I have used this procedure with advanced, general and basic level classes always with the same enjoyable results. They tell me that they like the story or that they are writing about the story.

Most students produce more or less what I expected: a record of the pictures, feelings, hunches, guesses that occurred in their minds as they read. By reading a class set of responses you will learn what you need to know in order to make further provisions and to take the next steps in this inquiry process.

There are many variations and possibilities for you to develop on your own initiative. Based on my own experience in about ten different classrooms, I am convinced of the value of the procedure for both curriculum and staff development. What excites me is the potential for cooperative enquiry and development left with the teachers. There are not only insights into the vast area of how a reader reads (or listens), or how a story works in the mind, but also many insights and challenges to our traditional or 'teacherly' preoccupations. But as always those matters are left entirely in your hands.

Each reader builds up a coherent interpretation of a text...and each reader will do it differently, because the decisions that have to be made depend to some extent on individual disposition and experience both of the world and of literature. Not only will different readers read the same book differently because their different repertoires of personal and literary experience predispose them to focus on some aspects more than others, but the same reader can never read the same text again the same way.

(Jack Thompson 1984 in ***Response to Literature***
Ontario Ministry of Education 1987)

Activities for Teaching Non-fiction and Fiction

The following concepts are taken from the ***Junior High School Language Arts Curriculum Guide***. The suggestions, ideas and activities that follow are samples only and are not intended to represent an exhaustive list, or a complete lesson sequence.

Boris is a fiction title from the recommended Grade 7 list. ***Paycheques and Picket Lines*** is non-fiction, from the Grade 7 list.

<table>
<tr><th>Concept</th><th>Boris</th><th>Pay Cheques & Picket Lines</th></tr>
<tr><td>23. Reading is an active process that involves the reader in the construction of meaning.</td><td colspan="2">Structure opportunities BEFORE, DURING and AFTER reading for students to express what they think the reading is about, what they think it is saying, how they feel about it and how they think the author has influenced them. This is all speculative—students must feel comfortable and feel that this is truly speaking or writing to clarify thought. Its purpose is to shape opinions and consider alternatives—not to express even initial judgments.</td></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="3">24. Appropriate prereading strategies can assist readers to understand what they are reading.</td><td colspan="2">mind map, web, or cluster what students already know about or think they know about:</td></tr>
<tr><td>Leningrad
"the 500 days in 1942–1943"
children and war</td><td>union strikes
walkouts and lockouts</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">what do we know? think we know? want to find out about?</td></tr>
<tr><td>focus/purpose</td><td>experience
reading for pleasure</td><td>acquire information
read for information</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td colspan="2">(answering questions can aid in understanding but a focus on information retrieval will lead students to choose efferent reading strategies over aesthetic)

Discuss titles, pictures, charts, forms and stylistic choices.</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td>How might one present dreams or diaries in prose narrative?</td><td>How might one present an historical prespective? make complex information accessible? and present many related but varied facts?</td></tr>
</table>

Concept	*Boris*	*Pay Cheques & Picket Lines*
25. Selection of appropriate strategies during reading can assist readers to understand what they are reading.	Examine copy Speculate as to the purpose(s) of format clues and organizational devices that students identify: e.g., indentation italics illustrations mid-chapter breaks	illustrations photographs cartoons charts timelines...
	Formulate questions, predict events and log reactions to ideas encountered in the literature. e.g., How do you think you might react after being returned to the city unharmed if a Russian soldier said, "The only good German is a dead German?" (p. 71)	How do you think you might react had you been injured on "Bloody Sunday" in the Winnipeg General Strike? (p. 68)
	After responding by writing or speaking, reread a section, chapter or item and record what students have noticed or reacted to differently. Record vocabulary that is unfamiliar or that appears to be specific to a particular text, discuss choices and reread the material. e.g., historical terminology dialect foreign names	union slang acronyms

Concept	*Boris*	*Pay Cheques & Picket Lines*
26. Appropriate strategies following initial reading can assist students to respond to and reflect on what they read.	Draft various responses to the reading, and consider what connections are apparent.	
	Draft a diary entry of one of the German patrol soldiers.	Draft a diary entry for an employer who does not wish his employees to form a union local.
	Draft a newspaper account of the theatre performance	Draft a newspaper account of a parent's labour dispute with a messy family.
	Draft a list of some of the things you think Boris learned from Nadia.	Draft a list of some of the things you think you have learned from the cartoon illustration.
27. Reading comprehension and decisions about the significance of a literary work require an understanding of the author's purpose, an ability to infer and evaluate, and some knowledge of literary tradition, techniques and author's point of view. 28. Appreciation of literature is also enhanced by some understanding of form, structure and literary style. 29. Human attitudes and values can be explored through a study of the characters encountered in literature.	Involve students in continued experience with other works by this author, OR related materials by other authors. Skills to be developed depend on consistent exposure to literature made memorable for other than efferent reasons. Relating similar material to information stored as fact and retrieved for assessment purposes, has very limited appeal for adolescents and, therefore, limited success. Feelings have a greater life and broader purpose. A wider range of response experiences allows students to store more data for use in a greater variety of circumstances.	

Concept	*Boris*	*Pay Cheques & Picket Lines*
31. Life-long reading for enjoyment, appreciation and information is important to the well-being of the individual.	Strive for more aesthetic reading in both fiction and non-fiction. Enjoyment and appreciation in reading is of great importance to individual well-being, as well as being a facilitator to reading for information.	

ANNOTATIONS: NOVELS AND NON-FICTION

The following section lists annotations for both novels and non-fiction titles by genre and grade.

ANNOTATIONS

GRADE 7

PAGE

Animal Stories

Wild Trek; Kjelgaard, Jim 31

Wolf of Shadows; Strieber, Whitley 32

Historical Fiction

Boris; Ter Haar, Jaap 33

Children of the Wolf; Yolen, Jane 34

Days of Terror; Smucker, Barbara Claassen 35

Dragon Slayer, Sutcliff, Rosemary 36

The Night Journey; Lasky, Kathryn 37

The Slave Dancer; Fox, Paula 38

Mystery

Locked in Time; Duncan, Lois 39

Shadows on the Wall; Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds 40

Non-fiction

Journey to the Top of the World; Foster, Janet 41

Pay Cheques and Picket Lines; Mackay, Claire 42

Realistic Fiction

Angel Square; Doyle, Brian 43

Ash Road; Southall, Ivan 44

Meet the Austins; L'Engle, Madeleine 45

Summer of the Swans; Byars, Betsy 46

Winners; Collura, Mary-Ellen Lang 47

Speculative Fiction

A String in the Harp; Bond, Nancy 48

Kashka; McKenzie, Ellen Kindt 49

Tom's Midnight Garden; Pearce, Philippa 50

GRADE 8

Historical Fiction

The Children's Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy; Colum, Padraic 51

The Emperor's Winding Sheet; Walsh, Jill Paton 52

The King's Fifth; O'Dell, Scott 53

The Samurai's Tale; Haugaard, Erik Christian 54

Shadow in Hawthorn Bay; Lunn, Janet 55

The Witch of Blackbird Pond; Speare, Elizabeth George 56

Non-fiction

Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family; Gies, Miep; Gold, Alison L. 57

Why Are They Starving Themselves?; Landau, Elaine 58

Realistic Fiction

Anne of Green Gables; Montgomery, Lucy Maude 59

Homecoming; Voigt, Cynthia 60

No Word for Good-bye; Craig, John 61

The Return; Levitin, Sonia 62

The True Story of Lilli Stubeck; Aldridge, James and Ringwood, Victoria 63

Speculative Fiction

Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast; McKinley, Robin 64

Crewel Lye: A Caustic Yarn; Piers Anthony 65

The Dark Is Rising; Cooper, Susan 66

Dragonsong; McCaffrey, Anne 67

The Keeper of the Isis Light; Hughes, Monica 68

Tunnel in the Sky; Heinlein, Robert A. 69

GRADE 9

Historical Fiction

The Bronze Bow; Speare, Elizabeth George 70

Dragonwings; Yep, Laurence 71

The Endless Steppe: Growing Up In Siberia; Hautzig, Esther 72

Iceblink; Montgomery, Rutherford 73

Manwolf; Skurzynski, Gloria 74

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Smith; Garfield, Leon 76

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Mystery

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Mystery of the Witches' Bridge; Carlton, Barbee Oliver 79

People of Darkness; Hillerman, Tony 80

Non-fiction

Dead Serious: A Book for Teenagers About Teenage Suicide; Leder, Jane Mersky 81

Mother Teresa: Her People and Her Work; Doig, Desmond 82

Sons and Seals: A Voyage to the Ice; Wright, Guy David 83

Realistic Fiction

Dreamspeaker; Hubert, Cam 84

Ellen Foster; Gibbons, Kaye 85

Jacob Have I Loved; Paterson, Katherine 86

The Moonlight Man; Fox, Paula 87

On the Edge; Cross, Gillian 88

Very Far Away From Anywhere Else; LeGuin, Ursula K. 89

Speculative Fiction

Foundation; Asimov, Isaac 90

Magic Kingdom for Sale/Sold; Brooks, Terry 91

Kjelgaard, J. — *Wild Trek*

Holiday House, 1950 reprint
Toronto: Bantam Books, 1981
Paperback

ISBN: 0-553-15687-X

Related Resources:
- *Big Red*
- *Lion Hound*
- *Snow Dog*
- *Stormy*

Wild Trek is an adventure story of the fearless snow dog, Chiri, and his master, Link Stevens, a trapper near the Caribou Range in northern Canada in the early 1900s. When an injured Mountie arrives at Link's door and reports that he must enter the Caribou Range to find a naturalist and his party, Link decides that the man is in no condition to travel any further, and states that he and Chiri will continue the injured man's mission. The two valiantly enter the nearly inaccessible northern mountains in their search for the naturalist. Link learns to rely on Chiri's wild survival methods and discovers previously untapped resources within himself. Battling a cougar and bloodthirsty wolves, enduring the raging storms of the high mountain passes, fording turbulent streams and dealing with the madness of men are some of the challenges that Link and Chiri face.

Kjelgaard tells this riveting story of adventure and the intense love between a man and his dog through the eyes of an observant narrator. Using careful description and lots of action, the author transports the reader to the harsh world of the Canadian North during the time of the fur trade. This is a novel of intense action, about survival and the loyal relationship between a man and an animal.

Strieber, W. *Wolf of Shadows*

New York: Fawcett
Crest/Ballantine Books, 1985
100 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0–449–21089–8

Related Resources:
War Day

Wolf of Shadows is a poignant account of the horror of nuclear war and its effects on all living creatures. Set in the lake country of northern Minnesota, this novel reveals the plight of a woman, her daughter and a group of wolves as they struggle to survive a nuclear winter. The ***Wolf of Shadows*** accepts the humans into the pack, but they must remain at the back and be prepared to accept and follow his lead. Their journey southward is filled with pain and suffering, yet the wolves and the humans work together as a unit to fend off death. United by desperation, they fight off freezing temperatures, endless snow and attacks from roving wild dogs, and they experience the savagery of other humans. The small group shares warmth, shelter and the unending hunt for food. They develop an understanding of each other that is built on trust and cooperation. The humans, because of their lack of defenses with respect to the environment, are constantly reminded of their position in and their reliance on the wolf pack.

Strieber presents a powerful insight into a world ransacked by nuclear bombs and makes us aware of the inherent danger that will affect all living creatures should nuclear war become a reality. Throughout the story, the reader is confronted with the themes of love, trust, understanding, survival and death. Detailed descriptions give the reader vivid visual images of a country ravaged by nuclear holocaust.

This is the story of a bond that develops between a group of wolves and two humans as they strive for the common goal of survival.

Ter Haar, J. *Boris*

St Catherines, Ontario:
Houghton Mifflin Canada
1990
Paperback

ISBN: 0-688-15857-2

World War II, while it may still have immediacy for many adults, is an historical event for junior high school students and may indeed seen irrelevant. But what is not irrelevant for students is an understanding of fear, hunger, friendship and compassion. All of these elements come into focus in ***Boris***, the story of a 12-year-old Russian boy whose love and concern for his widowed mother lead him into the forbidden territory dividing the besieged city of Leningrad from the German lines around it.

Boris and his friend Nadia know about war and about whom they think are "the enemy"; through very convincing dialogue they express their sense of hatred and uncertainty about the German enemy. For these two, the enemy is inhuman, murderous and callous. But what they learn is that the enemy soldiers are driven to war by no choice of their own. They are, in fact, the very men who risk their lives to save these two Russian children.

Jaap Ter Haar skillfully shows war from its many angles through both the sentiments of hungry, deprived children and through the realizations they come to about the ultimate waste of war and the victimization of everyone it touches. In the end, there is no enemy; only the ideology that pits one human against another. What rises above this is human courage.

Historical Fiction Grade 7

Yolen, J. *Children of The Wolf*

New York: Viking Press
1984
133 pages Hardcover

ISBN: 0-670-21763-8

Jane Yolen bases ***Children of the Wolf*** on the bizarre diary of Reverend J.A.L. Singh, a missionary living in Midnapore India, in the 1920s. The story is based on Singh's account of his discovery of two wild girls who were found living with wolves. In the fictional account, Mr. Wells, a British minister in charge of an orphanage, along with two orphans, Mohandus and Rama, set off to discover and hunt down whatever has been "haunting" a nearby village. In a wolf den they discover a wolf, her two cubs and two feral creatures who resemble human beings. The mother wolf is killed and the two cubs are sold. The two girls are taken back to the orphanage where Mr. Wells has decided that his God-given task is to "civilize" them.

Mohandus feels very close to the girls. He gradually begins to communicate with them, and eventually becomes their teacher as the others tire of the novelty of the wolf children. He names the two girls Amala and Kamala and has an innate understanding and compassion for their plight. The girls resist giving up the ways of wolves; they continue to eat raw meat, crawl on all fours, have strange blue eyes which glow in the dark, and destroy the clothing they are given. Mohandus gradually makes progress, but despite his best efforts, the youngest of the two dies. Mohandus continues to work with Kamala, and even manages to get her to walk upright even though it obviously pains her. She also learns a functional vocabulary. Unfortunately, most of the other orphans resent the arrival of the wild children and do all thay they can to impede Mohandus' success. In the end, Kamala dies; she is seen to be torn between her life with the wolves and her life with humans.

Yolen explores themes of human compassion, jealousy, intolerance of differences in people, and the white man's impulse to "civilize the world." Mohandus is portrayed as a very mature 14-year-old who is better at coping with new situations than adults; he emerges from this experience as a better human being who is especially sensitive to human suffering and need. Finally, Yolen leaves the reader wondering whether the girls should have been left with the wolves or brought back to the orphanage. Although this is a very sad story, it never becomes maudlin because of Mohandus' hope for the girls and his sensitive, straightforward narration of the story.

Smucker, B.C. *Days of Terror*

London: Penguin
1981
Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-31306-0

Awards:
Winner of the Canada Council Children's Literary Award and the Ruth Swartz Foundation Award

Related Resources:
Underground to Canada

This novel is the account of a young Russian Mennonite boy caught in the tensions of revolutionary Russia. As pacifists, Mennonites in Russia refused to raise arms to protect themselves from plundering groups such as the White Army. One exception is Otto Neufeld, the older brother of the protagonist, 10-year-old Peter Neufeld, who decides he can no longer watch his people suffer and die at the hands of thieving groups. Peter and his family struggle to survive the violence, prejudice, and famine of the times. The assistance given to Russian Mennonites by countries such as Canada and the United States is clearly described. In the end, Peter, with most of his family, is able to successfully emigrate to Canada.

Smucker focuses on the strength and the courage of the characters, on their heroism as she develops the reader's awareness of how this non-violent group of people sustain their faith in the face of adversity. Smucker brings to life a period of history through her detailed description and ordered time sequence.

A bibliography and footnotes complete the novel, encouraging interested readers to learn more about the Mennonite people.

Historical Fiction

Grade 7

Sutcliff, R.

Dragon Slayer: The Story of Beowulf

London: Penguin
1961

ISBN: 0-140-30254-9

Related Resources:
The Eagle of the Ninth.
(Carnegie Award Winner)
The Lantern Bearers
Dawn Wind

This is the tale of Hrothgar, king of the Danes, who has built near the sea the magnificent hall, Heorot. Here he sits with his thanes at the mead-drinking, and listens to the chanting of his gleemen. This is the way it was; the way it is now is that no man would risk staying in that hall overnight as a terrible monster named Grendel comes up from the marshland to slay any and all sleeping Danes. The tale of such wanton destruction is carried across the sea to where Beowulf resides. Because of his sense of gratitude to Hrothgar for kindness extended to his parents long ago, Beowulf vows to rid the hall of this menace. The subsequent battle is powerful and bloody, followed by another battle with the monster's mother. Great glory comes to Beowulf, and eventually he is made king. In the last and glorious battle the aged hero dies.

Sutcliff is less an analyst of history than a writer who brings it to pulsing life. Her hero, Beowulf, is cast in a traditional mold: brave, intensely honourable, and with only a small share of ordinary human fear or weakness. That is not to say, however, that he is a static or flat character. His world and its people, their thoughts, speech, and daily activities are pictured in penetrating detail through the scholarly power of Sutcliff's imaginative interpretation of this early period of English history. Sutcliff gives her readers historical fiction that is well worth the effort. She is a story teller who relates this essential epic with narrative power that invites enjoyment.

Lasky, K. *The Night Journey*

New York: Viking Penguin

ISBN: 0-140-32048-2

Reminiscences of an elderly great-grandparent can be a trying event for a 13-year-old, alert, and somewhat impatient young girl. And this is exactly what they are for Rachel, until her elderly great-grandmother begins to tell stories of her childhood in Russia. She tells these stories, of their joys and their fears, from the point of view of herself as the nine-year-old Jewish girl who devises the plan that will help her family escape from Russia. Nana Sashie, Rachel's great-grandmother, remembers events of the escape with vivid and colourful detail and Rachel is fascinated.

She is so fascinated that the stories become part of a nightly ritual. Thus the structure of the book encompasses two time periods: **now**, in which Rachel is involved with family, friends and frustrations of the immediate and busy world around her, and **then**, in which Nana Sashie, like other Russian Jews, suffered humiliation at every turn.

The journey motif is an important one in this book; not only is there a physical journey from Rachel's upstairs room to Nana Sashie's across the hall, but a psychological one as well. Rachel begins to understand something of her history and her own feelings for the struggle this great-grandmother had to undertake. The journey into memory involves Rachel in creating a sense of identity for this old and weak lady she has come to love, along with a depth of identity for herself. Rachel is more than the urban girl who approached her own Jewish history with something short of indifference. She comes to realize she is a part of a cultural group that has special prayers, restricted food laws, and scars from being persecuted.

Lasky captures the particular idiom of Jewish speech in the conversations between Sashie and her past and present family. There is humour, impatience and love in this extended family and Trina Shart Hyman's few black and white illustrations complement all the finely portrayed characters of the novel.

Historical Fiction

Grade 7

Fox, P. — *The Slave Dancer*

New York: Dell
Laural Leaf Library, 1973

ISBN: 0-440-96132-7

Paula Fox tells a poignant tale of a young boy, Jessie Bollier, who is forced to become part of the slave trade in one of its most horrifying and violent aspects, the buying and selling of human beings. The naive Jessie is kidnapped from his New Orleans home, taken aboard a slave ship bound for Africa, and becomes involved in the brutal transport of African men, women and children to the shores of the U.S.A. He is on board simply because he can play a flute and thereby provide music for the slaves to "dance" to; as partially fit human beings they will bring a better price on the auction block.

Jessie, however, is not allowed to be just an onlooking musician. He must take his turn killing rats in the hold, emptying foul-smelling latrines, and disposing of bodies overboard. This is a grim and powerful novel focused on a character who is perceptive, sensitive, and responsive to the brutality of the whole situation. That situation is presented through careful, meticulously crafted detail and with Jessie's sense of the immediacy of the sights, smells and sounds that surround him.

Through the first-person narrative the very personal sense of Jessie's home life as well as a wide range of characters is presented with penetrating vision. Fox exposes those men who dealt in selling human beings, exposes the horror, ruthlessness, and moral debasement of their lives, an aspect often overlooked by writers eager to dwell solely on the humiliation of the slaves.

She takes Jessie from the position of naive narrator who witnesses events that he cannot understand and has him become, through his journey, an insightful, agonizing being who has learned not only about an inhuman and debasing event, but much about himself as well.

Fox makes the reader care about what happens because she creates a world in which the reader finds a place, regardless of the historical period. She enlarges her reader's understanding of the human condition by establishing an authentic relationship between protagonist and reader. Thus her novels touch the deepest of feelings and she offers a fresh interpretation of bits and pieces of our lives through the lives of her characters.

Mystery Grade 7

Duncan, L. *Locked in Time*

New York: Dell
1986
Paperback

ISBN: 0-440-94942-4

Locked in Time is a suspenseful account of 17-year-old Nore Robbins, who goes to visit her father and her new stepfamily, Lisette, Gabe and Josie, at her father's estate in the Louisiana bayou country. Nore has an unusual awareness of time and soon discovers, through unusual comments and occurrences, that Shadow Grove is a place where time doesn't seem to exist. In fact, her stepfamily is locked in time forever. Over time the family has learned to acquire new "families" in order to cope with their timelessness. Each new family is disposed of before their secret is learned as Nore has done. When Nore attempts to share this knowledge with her father, she becomes her stepmother's target for murder.

Nore is a believable and recognizable character. A mood of mystery and suspense is created throughout the novel through vivid descriptions of the setting and events. Aspects of the supernatural and spells are described, which may disturb some readers. This is a fast-paced, exciting mystery where events leading to the climax are carefully developed to provide a spine-chilling, literary experience.

Naylor, P.R. — *Shadows on the Wall*

New York: Atheneum
1980
Hardcover
New York Trilogy: Book One
165 pages

ISBN: 0–689–30785–3

Related Resources:
Faces in the Water
Footprints at the Window

Shadows on the Wall is the story of Dan Roberts, an American teenager, who is mysteriously whisked off to York, England with his parents. Perplexed by his parents' rash decision and the seeming familiarity of his surroundings, Dan sets out to unravel the past and to piece together a solution to the strange situation that engulfs him. His friendship with Joe Stanton and Ambrose Faw brings about a series of bizarre events. Dan encounters centurions from the past, sees his own face appear as a Roman soldier's and acquires an ancient Roman silver piece that seals his connection with the past. A bewildered Dan learns about the history of York, the gypsy way of life and Celtic tradition. Through his own courage and determination, Dan attempts to deal with his inner fears while trying to understand his family's dilemma and his fascination with the past.

Naylor skillfully creates a setting and mood that complements the plot and explores the themes of courage, fear, determination and family relationships. Through dialogue, description and strong characterization, Naylor creates imaginative pictures of ancient Roman times, and gives reader insight into gypsy folklore.

Shadows on the Wall is the first in a trilogy about Dan's wrestle between the past and present as well as with his discovery that he may be a carrier of Huntington's disease. Although the book comes to a satisfactory conclusion, students will be drawn towards reading the other novels in the series.

Non-fiction Grade 7

Foster, J. *Journey to the Top of the World*

Toronto: Greey de Pencier
Books, Owl Books
1987
96 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-920-77517-9

Related Resources:
A Cabin Full of Mice
The Wilds of Whip-poor-will Farm
To the Wild Country
Adventures in Wild Canada

This book presents an interesting, information-packed account of the Fosters' journey to the top of the world. It describes their 1987 expedition from Newfoundland to the northern-most tip of Ellesmere Island.

Janet Foster tells their story in a conversational, first-person narrative. She describes their adventure in detail, including descriptions of land forms, physical phenomena and geological history of the Canadian North. Also featured are lively accounts of their encounters with numerous arctic animals; their discoveries of evidence of early arctic settlements and the remains of the ill-fated Franklin expedition; their experiences and adventures with various scientists, explorers and other people who live and work in the arctic regions; and interesting descriptions of travel and camping in our northern lands.

The detail of this rapidly paced account is supported by many fascinating and colourful photographs, most of which were taken by the Fosters during their trek. The language is rich and introduces students to a vast vocabulary easily understood within context or through clarification from carefully selected illustrations.

This work is current and exciting, providing students with information on a broad range of topics of interest from the past and the present.

Non-fiction Grade 7

Mackay, C. *Pay Cheques and Picket Lines*

Toronto: Kid's Can Press Ltd.
1987
104 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-921-10334-4

This book sets out to answer these questions: What is a union? Why did unions begin? How did they grow? What do they do? Will they be around when you start work? It delivers on this, and more.

Illustrated with photographs, cartoons and boxed-off vignettes, the text manages to address "everything you always wanted to know" about unions in Canada. Targeted for an adolescent audience, this book is full of information that fascinates without overwhelming. It is presented clearly and is connected to students' interests and to what students already know. The language of the labour union is introduced skillfully, becoming part of the readers' vocabulary in context.

In five chapters, Mackay discusses rationale, historical perspectives, purpose, operational information and speculation about the future of the labour movement in Canada. A "What Happened When" timeline is included.

This book provides a wealth of informative material in a manner easily accessible and fascinating in presentation and detail. As with all non-fiction, this book has a point of view. It strongly supports the position that unions have effected positive change for all workers, frequently following serious struggles with businesses.

Doyle, B. *Angel Square*

Vancouver, British Columbia
Douglas & McIntyre
Groundwood C 1984
1987
128 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-888-99070-7

Related Resources:
Up to Law
Easy Avenue

Angel Square is set in Ottawa shortly after the end of World War II. The story opens just prior to the advent of Christmas and centres on Tommy. Tommy and his friend Sammy usually battle their way across the square fighting with Irish Catholics, French Canadians and Jews. Tommy, who is "nothing," usually has Sammy for support, but Sammy's father Mr. Rosenberg has been beaten up in a racist attack and is in a coma in hospital.

Tommy is surrounded by a collection of marvelous people. His Auntie Dottie and her passion for cleanliness and his father, who is very tolerant, are the adults in Tommy's life. Tommy's retarded sister Pamela is a happy person who needs to be watched over carefully or some boys will try to "take advantage." Tommy worships Margot Lane from afar and he is saving his money to buy a special Christmas present for her. All of these people are richly drawn and make the story come alive.

Tommy sets out to discover who attacked Sammy's dad and gradually finds some clues as to the identity of the masked attacker. Eventually, with the help of the French Canadians he gets a promising lead and goes, armed with comic books for sale, to the suspect's apartment. In a scary scene Tommy outwits the huge stupid man and finds evidence of wrongdoing under his bed. Tommy spreads the news of the man's guilt and the community comes to chant their anger at the man's door.

This book contains many things: racial prejudice, mystery, humour and a trip down memory lane. There is a degree of violence, but the book rings true and it has an exemplary message. Doyle never allows himself to intrude into the first-person narrative but his writing is powerful and vivid. Tommy is an appealing, very human character.

In Brian Doyle's previous book, ***Up to Law***, all of the major characters, including Tommy, his sister, father and Aunt Dottie have already established themselves. The two books together present a rich literary experience for all of those lucky enough to encounter them.

Southall, I. *Ash Road*

Harmondsworth, England
Penguin
1967
Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-30314-6

Awards:
Australian Children's Book of the Year Award

A raging bushfire, accidentally set by three boys on an unsupervised camping trip, sets the stage for this book. As the bushfire consumes everything in its path, a small isolated community is threatened. Not realizing that their own homes and families may be in danger, the adults leave their town Ash Road to assist in fighting the fire in a nearby area. This is a story of survival, where the children act to overcome these tremendous problems.

The author, Ivan Southall, focuses on the development of the children as they are shaped by their experiences. Initially, the children are portrayed as vulnerable individuals. As they learn to cope in situations without the support of adults, the children take charge effectively with resourcefulness and independence. It is the growth of the children themselves, of their understanding, that is critical, rather than the events in the story. Based on his real-life experience with bushfires, Southall develops the plot with exciting, plausible events. While this is a fictional account of a "real" event, it is not dealt with in a superficial manner. Adversity is overcome, but not without suffering. This novel provides a rich literary experience for students, and engages their interest and imagination.

L'Engle, M. — *Meet the Austins*

New York: Dell
1981
Paperback

ISBN: 0-440-95777-X

Related Resources:
Ring of Endless Light
The Arm of the Starfish

Meet the Austins opens with the Austin family receiving a phone call that a close family friend, affectionately named Uncle Hal, has been killed, along with his co-pilot, in a plane accident. Hal's wife, Aunt Elena, a concert pianist, shares the guardianship of the co-pilot's 10-year-old daughter, Maggy, with the child's elderly grandfather, Mr. Ten Eyck. Because of her profession, Aunt Elena travels all over the world and feels that her lifestyle would not be good for Maggy; the child comes to live with the six-member Austin family in a rural community. From the moment of her arrival, Maggy, a spoiled child, disrupts the peaceful co-existence of the Austins with her sullen insolence and her misery. Twelve-year-old Vicky Austin is torn between being sympathetic because Maggy is an orphan and being angry and resentful at the way Maggy has complicated her life. Maggy, a precocious child, has temper tantrums, encourages Suzy Austin to steal candy, breaks things deliberately and is generally rude and uncooperative. Vicky finally comes to accept the fact that Maggy will be living with the Austins for a considerable period of time, and begins to see the positive changes in Maggy because of the love and support of the Austins. When Maggy's grandfather considers having her live with him, the Austin family realizes that Maggy has become a part of their family and that they do not want her to leave.

Meet the Austins is the story of a family that copes positively with life's difficulties. With Vicky as the narrator, the reader sees an intimate portrait of a child's reactions to upsets in her family. Through a child's eyes, L'Engle explores themes of death, adoption, and the healing power of love. As L'Engle is such a popular author with elementary children, grade 7 students will find this an accessible and familiar starting point for junior high literature and will be interested in reading the other novels in L'Engle's Austin family series.

Byars, B. — *The Summer of the Swans*

New York: Penguin Puffin Books
1981
142 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-31420-2

Awards:
A Newberry Award Book

The Summer of the Swans is the touching story of a day in the life of a confused 14-year-old, Sara Godfrey. Discontent and anger fill most of her waking moments. Although she cannot control or understand her changing moods and feelings, Sara does possess a definite love for Charlie, her mentally handicapped brother. Her outing with Charlie to see the swans is somewhat frustrating for Sara but she would later understand its impact upon Charlie. Not until Charlie disappears during the night does Sara forget about her own small imperfections and worries and reflect upon the frustration and entrapment that Charlie faces each and every day of his life.

Byars presents an intimate portrait of a girl's troubled adolescence and explores the themes of family relationships, values, love and understanding. Through her use of symbolism and dialogue, Byars presents an insight into the importance of caring for others.

This is a novel of character development; a novel of a teenage girl who develops an awareness of the feelings of other people.

Realistic Fiction

Grade 7

Collura, M. L.

Winners

Saskatoon, Saskatchewan:
Western Producer Prairie Books
1984
129 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-888-33116-9

Winners is the story of Jordy Threebears and his return to the Ash Creek Indian reserve after being shuffled from foster home to foster home for eight years. He goes to live with his grandfather, Joe Speckledhawk, who has just been released from prison for avenging the fatal beating of his daughter, Jordy's mother, by two white men. Jordy and Joe are strangers and struggle to achieve a normal grandfather-grandson relationship. Jordy also must struggle at school to overcome the stereotyping applied to him. With the help of a teacher, Miss McTavish, and a blind friend, Emily, he is able to direct his pent-up hostilities and insecurities to something constructive: training the horse Joe has given him. However, Jordy's happiness is marred by his determination to unravel his past; by the end of the novel, Jordy is one of the winners in the book.

Winners is all about a young man's search for his past and his desire to overcome the discrimination and hatred for his race. The vocabulary is not difficult and the story moves along at a brisk pace that keeps the reader interested. The characters are somewhat stereotyped but plausible. The novel would be appealing to wide range of students with varied abilities and interests.

Speculative Fiction

Grade 7

Bond, N.

A String in the Harp

New York: Viking Penguin
1976

ISBN: 0-140-32376-7

One of the major accomplishments of intertwining myth and realism is that the world of harsh rationality is allowed to take on a less rigid, less regular and exacting contour. This is what the Celtic mythic character of Taliesin, a sixth-century Welsh bard, contributes to ***A String in the Harp***. The predominant realism predominates in this novel provides the setting for the fanciful element that affects the everyday life of 12-year-old Peter Morgan and his family.

The Morgans have recently come to Wales and are miserable. Their withdrawn, newly widowed father has taken a teaching year at the university; 15-year-old Jen arrives for a holiday and she, along with her usually cheerful 10-year-old sister Becky, become worried about their uncharacteristically brooding brother. Peter reveals that he has found Taliesin's 1000-year-old harp tuning key and that through its powers he actually "sees" episodes in the life of the sixth-century singer. Soon though, not only Peter but others in his presence begin to observe strange events and appearances that can only be explained by his story.

This is a novel about adjustment, about a family's learning to deal with grief and to develop faith in one another. Wales becomes the symbol of what has happened and what is happening in the progress of the novel. Borth, the Welsh village where the Morgans have settled, is in wintertime the equivalent of the mother's death—a long, drab string of houses, oppressed by dark mountains, leaden skies and unrelenting rain. But the rebirth of spring brings not only new, bright life to the village, but to the family's relationships as well.

The mythic element, though not as well developed as it might be, symbolizes the deeper vision of the novel: Peter's fascination with the tuning key and its accompanying images of "songs" aptly dramatize his withdrawal to a magical, inner world of his own. It is here that reality fades into fantasy.

This tale is characterized by descriptive detail of the reality of place as well as its mystery, and is one which permits a range of Welsh characters, whose speech makes the reader aware of the cadenced English spoken by those characters. Peter's struggle to "give back" the key to Taliesin constitutes the main plot of this novel, but the family's gradual healing and emotional reunion are seen as the most important outcomes.

McKenzie, E.K. *Kashka*

New York: Henry Holt & Company
1987
258 pages Hardcover

ISBN: 0-805-00327-4

Kashka, the court acrobat and musician, and his look-alike cousin Piff become friends with the lonely, shy Princess Ekama who is visiting the land of Nazor. The evil sorceress, Lady Ysene, holds the Princess in thrall and through her powers over the Princess plots to take over the kingdom of Nazor. Kashka discovers the Lady Ysene's plans and undertakes the dangerous task of saving Princess Ekama and the kingdom of Nazor from her evil grip.

In Kashka, elements of a fairy tale are evident: a battle between good and evil, and characters such as a beautiful princess, a handsome prince, a kind king and, of course, one evil sorceress. McKenzie develops the character of Kashka from that of an irresponsible nuisance in many respects to one of responsibility and maturity.

Although the beginning of this novel may be a challenge for readers due to the complicated plot and many characters to keep straight, it does develop into an exciting reading experience for the persevering reader.

Speculative Fiction Grade 7

Pearce, P. *Tom's Midnight Garden*

New York, NY: Dell/Dell
1986

240 pages Paperback Reprint

ISBN: 0-140-30893-8

Tom Long is reluctantly sent by his parents to spend his summer holiday with his aunt and uncle, the Kitsons. He has been placed in quarantine and must be confined for two weeks. The Kitson's flat is in an old house "oblong, grave, plain," hemmed in among characterless modern houses. At the back of the house is a narrow paved space, so Tom has no place to play. At night when the grandfather clock strikes 13 Tom finds the narrow paved space transformed into a marvelous garden. Tom discovers after a couple of visits that time in the garden stands still. As a result he starts to make his nightly trips to the garden. He eventually meets a little girl named Hatty with whom he plays most evenings for the rest of his stay at the Kitson's flat. Although Hatty is older than Tom the friendship develops until Hatty realizes the age difference and starts leading an independent life. The story concludes with Tom realizing that the old woman who owns the house, Mrs. Bartholomew, is Hatty.

The strength of Phillippa Pearce's book is its simplicity. The book has a directness and a strong narrative line. Pearce relies on a narrative technique and in this manner inspires belief without sacrificing any of the mystery the book holds for the reader. Although the story on first view appears to be geared for young children, the strong narrative line will involve much older students. Once they have fallen into the story, the discussion and final resolution of the puzzle with respect to time will keep the most curious student reading to the end.

The relationship between Hatty and Tom should be discussed in the classroom. It will help students recognize the value of friendships and how and why these relationships change. Tom learns through his contact with Mrs. Bartholomew Hatty that time can be conquered. This recognition opens up the possibility that the young can find links to the past and can get a sense of history.

Historical Fiction

Grade 8

Colum, P.

The Children's Homer: The Adventures of Odysseus and the Tale of Troy

London: Collier Macmillan
1982

ISBN: 0-020-42520-1

The long voyage of Odysseus from Ithaca to Troy and the subsequent search for him by his son Telemachus are two classic patterns in literature and especially in children's literature. In the first instance the journey motif is important: while Odysseus is on a physical journey into an unknown part of the world he is, at the same time, involved in a psychological journey. Odysseus' adventure is the archetypal pattern for the individual journey toward learning and maturity.

Telemachus' search for his father is the second classic pattern: the search for identity through finding or recognizing the father. This theme is important to and frequently found in children's novels, especially in recent realistic fiction. Colum profiles these two patterns in the glorious saga of heroism and magical adventure in ***The Children's Homer***.

His treatment of the Trojan war and the wanderings of Odysseus, was originally published in 1919. While the language may seem somewhat formal today, this very formality reflects the dignity and stateliness of its subject matter.

The retelling of the epic adventures is remarkably fresh and immediate and is both rich and poetic in detail and tone. Odysseus' perilous journey takes him to the land of the Cyclops, to Circe's island, and then to an encounter with the six-headed serpent Scylla. The returning hero confronts those who wish to usurp his throne and re-establishes himself as rightful and returned king.

The Greek ideals of cool intellect, patience and resourcefulness are found in both Penelope and Odysseus. They exhibit these qualities and hold tenaciously to their goals even when men and gods are arrayed against them. This is a story of love, respect, and fortitude and one of the great classics of our western literary heritage.

Walsh, J.P. *The Emperor's Winding Sheet*

Globe Modern
1990
Paperback

ISBN: 0-889-96248-0

Related Resources:
Destruction of the Greek Empire by Edwin Pears
The Fall of Constantinople by Steven Ranciman

Piers Barber, a young seaman from Bristol, is kidnapped from a British merchant ship by Turkish pirates. He is transported to the court of Emperor Constantine where he becomes the unwilling talesman of the Emperor. It has been prophesied to the Emperor that even if one person is at his side when he takes the crown and this person stays with him, the city will not fall to any enemies. This is the story of the fall of Constantinople in 1453 and of the siege that marked the end of the Byzantine Empire.

Walsh has chosen a complex series of events to capture between the covers of a book. She succeeds, partly by mastery of the subject, but more by narrative technique, for by choosing to see events through the eyes of Piers she is able to stay very close to the action and yet to describe it with a degree of detachment.

Piers, who has been rechristened by the Emperor "Vrethiki—lucky find," knows no Greek. Even after a year in court he still understands no more than half of what he hears or sees. So the action is seen through a veil of Vrethiki's incomprehension. Everything is kept in a low key to increase the force of the story's crises.

This book was written from the point of view of Byzantium and the West. It does not represent the point of view of the Turks. J.P. Walsh has written a book about a time and place that is definitely foreign for most readers, but her understanding of the subject matter coupled with her understanding of her readers has made a book that once started will be read willingly by all readers.

O'Dell, S. *The King's Fifth*

Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin
1966
Hardcover

ISBN: 0-395-06963-7

Related Resources:
The Black Pearl
Island of the Blue Dolphin
Sing Down the Moon

The King's Fifth is set around the canyon country of the southwestern United States. Esteban de Sanderal is a young map maker, who along with five other men and their guide Zia, a young Indian woman, undertake this journey. Motivated by greed for gold, Captain Mendoza and his men are looking for the golden "cities of Cibola," the legendary world below the Grand Canyon. Father Francisco is motivated by his desire to bring Christianity to the Indians. Esteban is motivated by curiosity about the place, but he is soon touched by the gold. The story reaches its climax in the fight between good and evil over the gold and the souls of the Indians.

Scott O'Dell has won the Newberry Award and the Hans Christian Anderson International Medal. He is an American by birth and residence, who writes principally in the area of historical fiction.

The first-person narrative provides unity and coherence to O'Dell's story and allows him, as author, to assimilate his research, personal knowledge and experience with little appearance of intrusion.

The shifting narration demands a slightly more sophisticated reader, but the student will be generally rewarded by the exciting story and the beautiful prose.

Haugaard, E.C. *The Samurai's Tale*

Boston, MA; Houghton Mifflin
1984

ISBN: 0-395-34559-6

As the book opens, Taro is perilously close to death. He is rescued by Lord Akiyania, an enemy samurai who ultimately becomes the boy's patron. Taro, the only surviving member of a defeated noble family, is first sent to the kitchens to work, then to the stables. Finally he attains the position of messenger and his rank of samurai is restored. During this time he cultivates the virtue of the class he is born into and is sent on a number of dangerous missions, among them helping to break a siege on a castle. Not only is he a warrior, but a young man who falls in love and composes lyrics to a young girl of noble blood.

Erik Haugaard, who was born in Copenhagen (1923), has immersed himself in Japanese life, history and culture. His episodic adventure story is at the same time a psychological novel, delving into the hero's development and commenting on his turns of fortune. Told by an old man in a village, Taro's story follows a biographical pattern, each episode rounded out with the making of friends and the appearance of enemies. This personal side of Taro's life is expertly played out against the complex historical backdrop of the Kai region of Japan. The characterization of Taro is excellent and the elaborate samurai code and social structure of traditional Japan are well explained. The dialogue, in the first person, is crisp and clipped and suggestive of oriental language. The polysyllabic Japanese names might be difficult for some readers to keep track of, so a list of characters is worth making. This book requires a slow, attentive reading, because of the intricacy of the relationships, but the story is fast-paced.

Erik Haugaard comments on his writing, "I conceive of my fellow men as individuals: lonely figures trying to understand the dilemma they are born into. To live, to survive, is to me an heroic task but not necessarily a tragic one; victory is possible, at least on an individual level. The possibility of love and friendship exists; it is not a matter of chance but of choice. I cannot conceive of literature without this faith; the choiceless man going to his doom is but a silent brute, and he would not have left behind him the literature, art, and music of which we have a right to be justly proud."

Lunn, J. — *Shadow in Hawthorn Bay*

Markham, Ontario: Penguin
1988

ISBN: 0-140-32436-4

Awards:
- Canada Council Children's Literature Prize
- Canada Young Adult Book Award
- Canadian Library Association Book of the Year Children's Award
- National Chapter I.O.D.E. Book Award

Related Resources:
- *The Root Cellar*

Shadow in Hawthorn Bay is the story of 15-year-old Mary Urquhart's journey from the Highlands of Scotland to Upper Canada in 1815. Having the gift of second sight, Mary "hears" the desperate plea of her cousin, Duncan, who has recently emigrated with his family to Canada. Mary feels compelled to leave home to follow Duncan. After a harrowing journey from Scotland, Mary finally arrives in Hawthorn Bay only to discover that Duncan has died and that his family has returned to their Scottish home. Mary, heartbroken, has no choice but to stay in Hawthorne Bay and finds herself at odds with her practical neighbours and their disbelief in the psychic powers, witches and ghosts which are so much a part of Mary's life. Continuing to hear Duncan "calling from his grave," Mary is increasingly drawn to the dark waters of Hawthorn Bay where she finally figures out that Duncan committed suicide by drowning himself. It is only with the help of Henry and Luke Anderson that Mary eventually learns to cope with her new life and lets Duncan's ghost rest.

The story not only has a well-developed plot, but also gives the reader a picture of what travel and life were like in the early 1800s. Told from the position of a close observer, Lunn's novel is a journey and coming-of-age story that combines fantasy and historical fiction. The Gaelic terms, which add to Mary's character development, are translated in glossary form at the beginning of the book. Using detailed description and realistic dialogue, Lunn invites the reader to share the complexities of early Canadian life with Mary Urquhart.

Historical Fiction

Grade 8

Speare, E. G.

The Witch of Blackbird Pond

New York: Dell Publishing Co., Inc.
1958
Paperback

ISBN: 0-440-99577-9

The Witch of Blackbird Pond is the suspenseful story of an impulsive orphan, Kit Tyler. In 1687 she is forced to move from the freedom and beauty of Barbados to the bleak, repressive Puritan colony of Wethersfield, Connecticut. She must learn to deal with fear and suspicion. Her ability to swim and to read are suspect and her clothes are not permissible. Through Nat Eaton, Kit is made aware of the trial by water for witches. Kit also learns of the solemnity and simplicity of Puritan life.

Religious devotion, adherence and hard work are a must. Kit's desire to be her own person leads her to attempt to liven up the teaching of the Catechism, to secretly meet and teach Prudence Cruff to read and write, and to befriend Hannah Tupper, a Quaker and suspected witch at Blackbird Pond. During the time that she spends with Hannah, Kit develops into a strong, loving person who clings to her love of life, her friendships, her desire for freedom and her growing love for Nat Eaton.

Speare presents a portrait of a strong-willed girl who is trapped by a set of rules and beliefs that she does not understand. Through her use of dialogue, detailed description, and careful sentence structure, Speare creates imaginative pictures of the period. The themes of love, friendship, determination, family values and religious freedom/persecution permeate the plot.

This is a novel of character and plot; a novel of a loving, somewhat rash girl who clings to a dream to help her survive the loneliness and suspicion that surround her.

Non-fiction

Grade 8

Gies, M.
Gold, A. L.

Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family

New York: Simon & Schuster
1988
252 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-671-66234-1

Many people are familiar with the story of Anne Frank and her diary. This book tells another story, that of the woman on whom Anne's life—and her diary—depended. Mep Gies is the woman who hid the Frank family, risking her own life to bring them food, news, and emotional support.

Gies's story is simply told in first-person narrative. She tells of her life before and during the Nazi occupation, focusing on recollections of the Franks and of her resistance activities. Each event is carefully transcribed from years of remembrance to present for us a moving account of this frightening time.

Students can easily empathize with the characters; a strong emotional response is evoked. The story is interesting, since students already know some of the history and significance of the characters as individuals and as symbols. This story offers a new perspective on Anne's life and may serve as an alternate or companion to Anne's diary.

Eighteen chapters are divided into three major sections, framed by a prologue and epilogue. Photographs and illustrations are included to help students with location and period.

This is the story of "ordinary people" whose bravery and courage made special contributions to the lives of others.

Non-fiction

Grade 8

Landau, E.

Why Are They Starving Themselves?

New York: Simon & Schuster, Julian Messner
1983
110 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-671-49492-9

This book gives us a comprehensive and compassionate overview of what anorexia nervosa and bulimia are all about. It truly seeks an "understanding" of these two eating disorders. Landau combines case histories and statements by the afflicted with general information about the diseases—their symptoms, progress, and treatment. She presents a factual and compelling picture of how the lives of these people are out of control.

Organized into eight chapters, Landau blends information with personal account; discusses in detail the family situations that can foster an eating disorder as a coping mechanism; and offers guidelines for identifying the onset of the condition and pursuing treatment techniques. She describes effective approaches to confronting the disorder in a manner that maintains the dignity of her subjects and underscores the complexity of their disease.

Fascinating, yet frightening, the book is ideal for exploring the presentation of information—the balance between personal anecdote and informative discussion. It is clearly written, easy to read, and a fine model of a manner in which students might present information of their own experience or the experience of others.

A bibliography is included, and related material is identified throughout the text. Many of the agencies mentioned as sources of information or centres for assistance are American. For information in Alberta you may contact the

1) Alberta Medical Health Services Division at 427-4444
2) Personal Development Centre at 487-6492
3) Executive Director, 15108 - 76 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5R 2Z9
4) Women's Program and Resource Centre, 11019 - 90 Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T6G 2E1
5) National Eating Disorder Information Centre, 200 Elizabeth Street, Toronto, Ontario, M5G 2C4, CW1 328

Montgomery, L. M. *Anne of Green Gables*

London: L.C. Page & Company
1908
Reprint Toronto: McClelland and Stewart Bantam Seal Books1985
Paperback

ISBN: 0-770-42111-3

Related Resources:
Anne of Avonlea
Chronicles of Avonlea
Anne of the Island

Anne of Green Gables is the engaging tale of a precocious orphan girl, who by mistake comes to live with a staid and proper Matthew and Marilla Cuthbert of Avonlea, Prince Edward Island. After Matthew persuades his sister to keep Anne, Marilla vigorously takes on the task of making a "civilized lady" of her. Anne unwittingly finds herself in a variety of zany escapades such as dying her hair green, getting her best friend tipsy and contributing to cooking disasters. During her adolescence Anne develops into a strong and loving person capable of dealing with the death of Matthew, a change of her life's dreams and a new-found appreciation for her old school rival, Gilbert Blythe.

As a sympathetic observer, Montgomery presents an intimate portrait of a girl's adolescence and explores the themes of family values, vanity, love, friendship and death. Montgomery creates imaginative pictures of the period through her use of dialogue, detailed description and carefully crafted sentences.

This is a novel of character and plot; a novel of an intelligent, high-spirited girl with an active imagination, a witty tongue, and a large heart.

Voight, C. *Homecoming*

New York: Fawcett Juniper
1981
Paperback

ISBN: 0–449–70254–5

Related Resources:
Dicey's Song
A Solitary Blue
The Runner
Sons from Afar

Homecoming is the first in a series of novels about an abandoned family of four children who struggle to find a home. Dicey Tillerman, the eldest child, takes care of her brothers and sister when their mother leaves the children in a station wagon at a mall parking lot. Realizing that the family will be split up if social services become involved, Dicey and her siblings set out on a journey to find a home. Along the way the children face many adversities, which challenge and strengthen their love for one another and serve to strengthen their desire to find a home. One of the best parts of this novel is that good things as well as bad happen to the children as they journey on foot to find a home. The problem of finding food and shelter on a limited budget is their main concern, along with Sammy continuously getting in fights, Jame's often morose and sullen outlook on life, and Maybelle's obvious academic slowness. After the disappointment of not being able to live happily with a maiden aunt, the children set off again, this time to find their grandmother who lives a reclusive life on a farm. The children eventually find their grandmother and charm their way into her lonely life through music, painting, gardening, hard work and determination.

Homecoming explores themes of loyalty, the rights of children, family strengths and weaknesses. The courageous potential of the human spirit is portrayed through Dicey's determination to find a home for her family. Voight's sensitive portrayal of the children invites the reader to enter into their thoughts at various points in the story. The descriptions of people and their obvious love and loyalty for one another and their resourcefulness in the face of adversity draw the reader into the Tillerman's world. This novel evokes strong emotions and will invite students to read Voight's other novels about the Tillermans.

Realistic Fiction

Grade 8

Craig, J.

No Word for Good-bye

Toronto, Ontario
Irwin Publishing Co.
1982
194 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-772-59006-0

No Word for Good-bye is the story of 15-year-old Ken Warren who befriends Paul Onaman, the son of an Ojibway Indian leader, during his summer vacation at Lake Kinniwabi. Ken's friendship with the native boy is frowned upon by the people of the small community. However, the two boys develop a bond that proves to be beneficial for both of them. Together they fight a huge forest fire along with the other men. When the community is plagued by thefts and break-ins, Ken and Paul set out to solve the problem amid the open prejudice and blame placed on the Indian people of the area. They form a common bond of understanding where Ken learns the Ojibway language, culture and way of thinking and Paul learns how to deal with the prejudice and ignorance of the community. Although they plan to fight the giant Empirico Company that threatens to overtake the Ojibway land, when Ken returns to the community, he finds that the native people have left their land and moved on. Even though he does not fully understand their reasons for leaving, Ken's curiosity and determination lead to his vow to find Paul and his people.

Craig delves into the realm of cross-cultural communication and explores the themes of friendship, trust, ignorance, prejudice, understanding and values. Through his characters and his use of dialogue, Craig opens the way for one cultural group to attempt to understand another.

Levitin, S. The Return

New York: Atheneum Macmillan
1987
213 pages Hardcover

ISBN: 0-689-31309-8

The Return is the story of Desta, a young Ethiopian Jewish girl who, with her brother and sister, is compelled to leave her aunt and uncle behind as revolutionary forces descend on their village. Their people are blamed for famine and drought, openly criticized, beaten and sometimes killed by their fellow countrymen. The three siblings tackle the insurmountable odds of famine and physical deprivation as they persevere in their trek to the Sudan. Desta and Almaz quickly learn how to deal with the harsh reality of the outside world when their brother is killed by bandits. Faced with the threat of attacks by bandits, soldiers and other Amharic people, Desta finds the courage and maturity to survive the elements as she and her sister struggle along the road to freedom.

Levitin's description of the intolerable conditions in refugee camps focuses attention on the fear and misery experienced by refugees in their desperate attempts to escape these conditions. Through dialogue, detailed description and strong characterization, Levitin portrays her characters' strength and determination to survive in a land where they are commonly known as "Falasha" (Strangers).

This novel examines the destructive elements of prejudice and discrimination. Based on Operation Moses, the secret 1986 airlift of Ethiopian Jews to Israel, it explores the themes of love, trust, death, maturity, perseverance and family ties as well as religious beliefs and customs.

Aldridge, J.
Ringwood, V.

The True Story of Lilli Stubeck

Ringwood, Victoria, Australia:
Penguin
1985
Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-32055-5

Awards:
Australian Children's Book of the Year, 1985

Seven-year-old Lilli Stubeck arrives with her impoverished, itinerant family in the small town of St. Helen in the middle of the Depression. The Stubeck's take up residence in a deserted, dilapidated shack on the outskirts of town and live by thievery, scavenging and begging. The standards of the Stubeck family are distinctively different from those of the townspeople. Conflicts result. Lilli is befriended by Kit, who tells her story through his eyes. Miss Dalgleish, the town's wealthiest woman, decides that Lilli would serve as a companion and "buys" Lilli from the Stubeck family for $25. Lilli is determined to maintain her independence and this results in a clash of wills between her and Miss Dalgleish.

Aldridge's characters are finely drawn. Lilli's struggle to maintain her independence and personal identity as she is subjected to Miss Dagleish's efforts to mold her into her image of a "young lady" is well developed. This story is unusual and interesting and should stimulate thoughtful discussion.

Speculative Fiction

Grade 8

McKinley, R.

Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast

New York: Harper and Row
1978
Paperback

ISBN: 0-060-24149-7

Beauty: A Retelling of the Story of Beauty and the Beast is a magical retelling of the well-loved fairy tale, Beauty and the Beast. In this story, Beauty's father loses most of his wealth and is forced to relocate his family from a fine home and life in the city to very reduced circumstances in the country. One day Beauty's father returns from the city and becomes lost in a mysterious wood close to their home. The story unfolds as Beauty's father picks a rose as a gift for his daughter and encounters the dreadful Beast who has ownership of all in the woods. The Beast agrees to spare his life on the condition that he allows one of his daughters to come and live with him. Beauty's love for her father leads her to offer herself as the one to fulfill her father's promise. Eventually she comes to love the Beast, and as in the old tale, the spell is broken and they live happily ever after.

Robin McKinley maintains an air of mystery even more powerful than that of the old tale as she develops new circumstances, a new world for her characters to explore themes such as loyalty, commitment and acceptance. The classic fairy tale, Beauty and the Beast, forms the basis for contemporary television and print versions. This is a traditional but expanded version of the original tale.

Piers, A. — *Crewel Lye: A Caustic Yarn*

Toronto, Random House of Canada Limited
1984
Ninth printing 1986
Paperback

ISBN: 0-345-34599-1

Related Resources:
The Spell for Chameleon
The Source of Magic
Castle Roogna

Imagine a world where everyone has a special magical power which, once discovered, allows the individual to become more than the circumstances of his birth would otherwise allow. This is a world where words may have many meanings and it is important that the protagonists know them all. It is a world where babies are delivered by storks and griffins and dragons roam the countryside.

As the story opens, Ivy, a young princess, has been told to stay in the Castle Roogna. To pass the time she strikes up a conversation with Jordan the Barbarian, a ghost of the castle. As they watch his past displayed on the magic tapestry Jordan tells Ivy of how he was betrayed by a cruel lie and killed. Jordan's power allowed him to heal himself from any mortal wound as long as his remains were together. Ivy discovers that Jordan's bones were scattered to various parts of the grounds around Castle Roogna and as a result he is unable to regenerate himself.

Ivy decides to help Jordan find his bones by washing the tapestry with Crewel Lye (a magical tapestry soap). This cleans up the picture and allows the two to see its images more clearly. As they follow the action on the hanging we discover that although Jordan is called the Barbarian, he is in fact a sentimental man capable of deep thoughts and feelings.

This is definately a piece of fantasy and in some circumstances it may be viewed as objectionable. In addition there is a heterosexual encounter between the protagonists that should be reviewed in relation to existing community standards. As a result review this book before attempting to use it. In fact all that is presented in the story is not as it seems. Since the author has used puns and situational comedy to entertain the reader, there is a great deal of humour in the work. This is perhaps its most redeeming feature. It may also be considered by some as cruel *(pun)ishment*.

Cooper, S. — *The Dark Is Rising*

New York, NY: Macmillan/Collier
1973
Reprinted 1986
192 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-689-71087-9

Awards:
Newberry Honour Award, 1974

Related Resources:
Over Sea, Under Stone
Greenwitch
The Grey King
Silver on the Tree

Will Stanton, the protagonist in the ***Dark Is Rising***, was born 11 years ago on Mid Winter Day. As the story opens this date seems to usher into Will's life a series of strange events. He discovers that he is the last of the "Old Ones," immortals dedicated throughout the ages to keeping the world from damnation by the Dark forces of evil. Because of Will's special gift, he is plunged into the quest for six magical signs that Will and the Old Ones may use in the final battle between the Dark and the Light. Over the 12 days of Christmas, which are part of Will's holiday, the struggle to locate the signs and prepare for the battle becomes the consuming passion of Will's life. The triumph of good over evil is described and the story comes to a satisfactory conclusion.

Susan Cooper, a permanent American resident, born in Britain, has tackled the genre of fantasy with a style that is at once robust and thoughtful. It is an ingeniously plotted story that vividly brings to life both good and evil. Cooper has drawn from a wide range of material; nearly every page contains a concept or image drawn from mythology. Although much of the mythology is beyond the grasp of the average reader, Herne the Hunter and the Celtic tree can be explored with even the youngest reader.

The Dark Is Rising is part one of the five-book ***The Dark Is Rising*** series. ***The Grey King***, another novel in the series, was awarded the 1976 Newberry Honor Award. Collectively, this series introduces the reader to a world on par with that of Tolkein's ***The Lord of the Rings***. Cooper's books do maintain a balance so that the younger readers can easily follow the plot and still learn something about the fantasy genre.

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McCaffrey, A. *Dragonsong*

New York: Atheneum Publishers
1976 reprint
Toronto: Bantam Books, Inc.,
1980
Paperback

ISBN: 0-553-14204-6

Related Resources:
Dragonsinger
Dragondrums
The Atlas of Pern by Karn Wynn Fonstad
"Dragonriders of Pern" Boardgame. Chicago: Mayfair Games, Inc.

Dragonsong is a novel of discovery both for the reader and the protagonist. McCaffrey develops a whole world, consistent and believable, in which her characters behave in a realistic manner. It is this believability which brings her story into the realm of excellent young adult literature.

Menolly is a young girl blessed with the talent to make music. After her teacher dies, she is denied the chance to develop her ability, because she is a girl and only men are allowed to become Harpers. The story follows Menolly's development from a shy, insecure girl to one who believes in her own abilities.

Through several subplots the reader is lead into a rich world. Events are viewed not only through Menolly's eyes and ears but from her emotional perspective. To understand McCaffrey's world, the reader should investigate and read her other novels. The reader must ask questions and infer the characters' motivations and relationships, much as we do in real life.

McCaffrey asks "What If.." human beings developed a symbiotic relationship with another lifeform. Man supplies the intelligence and the animal protects them from a natural disaster. The novel is not Fantasy; all facets of life on Pern are described in scientific terms or with science fiction conventions.

The main point to remember in teaching this novel is that it is a story of people and the problems one person encounters because of holding too strongly to tradition. It is a story of belief in oneself and the problems inherent in gender stereotyping.

Hughes, M. *The Keeper of the Isis Light*

London: Hamish Hamilton Children's Books Ltd. 1980 reprint,
London: Methuen Children's Books Ltd., 1987,
Paperback

ISBN: 0–416–21030–9

Related Resources:
Guardian of Isis
The Isis Pedlar

When a group of settlers from Earth land on the barren planet of Isis, Olwen, a young girl charged with the operation of the Isis Light, is nervous about what the newcomers will think of her. Guardian, Olwen's servant, insists that Olwen wear a germ-free suit whenever she descends into the valley to talk to the settlers.

The reader later discovers that Guardian is in fact a robot who had been told to take care of Olwen by her father as he was dying. We learn that the robot took his instructions literally and altered Olwen's genetic makeup and appearance to enable her to survive on the planet unprotected. The suit is intended to hide Olwen's lizard-like appearance from the colonists.

Olwen becomes friends with one of the colonists, Mark London, and learns the joy of human friendship. However, one day Mark discovers what Olwen looks like and rejects her because of her appearance. Olwen discovers what it is like to be thought of as less than human because of one's appearance.

Olwen rescues a small child during a sand storm and the community of survivors, especially the children, begin to accept her. In the end, however, Olwen decides that her own freedom and her relationship with Guardian are more important to her and she leaves the settlement to explore the rest of the planet.

Hughes has created a realistic world that comes alive as Olwen describes the beauty of the Mesa, comparing it to the stifling atmosphere of the valley where the settlers were forced to live.

Hughes tells the story from the perspective of an interested observer. She is able to see inside the mind of Olwen and therefore we are caught up in the way she interprets the events around her. This story deals with discrimination and self-realization in a manner that is sometimes difficult to discuss in realistic fiction for young adults.

Heinlein, R. A. — *Tunnel in the Sky*

New York, NY, Scribner
1955
Paperback

ISBN: 0-684-18916-X

Awards:
Hugo Award

Related Resources:
Space Cadet
The Rolling Stones
Citizen of the Galaxy.

Written in 1955, this novel explores the coming of age of a group of high school and university students in the future. It is a story of survival and self-reliance in the tradition of ***Swiss Family Robinson*** and ***Robinson Crusoe***. Heinlein is a master story-teller and has crafted a work dealing with personal development and development of society.

Rod Walker has to decide whether or not to take the final exam in his Advanced Survival course. The exam is similar to the Outward Bound experience that many students engage in today. "Deacon" Matson, Rod's instructor, tries to dissuade him from taking the course as he feels that Rod is temperamentally unsuited to the rigorous nature of the test. However, after a discussion with his sister, Rod decides to take the test. His sister outfits him and arms him with her knife, Lady Macbeth.

After a short time on an unknown planet Rod is ambushed and stripped of all his equipment except Lady Macbeth. He realizes that something has gone wrong with the test and that all the participants are stranded until they are rescued. Rod meets other people taking the test and they begin to work together to survive.

Problems arise when the older university students try to run things their way. They pay no attention to the younger students and there is conflict between the two groups. The conflict is resolved when the colony is almost destroyed because of a natural disaster. The majority of the students realize that if they had listened to Rod the disaster might have been prevented. Heinlein develops Rod's character by showing how he reacts to the various situations presented. From the changes in Rod's attitude the reader can infer how his character is maturing.

When the rescuers arrive Rod is once again relegated to the role of a teenager and is not recognized as the adult he has become. But his experiences have helped Rod to decide what to do with his future: he wants to lead colonists to new worlds.

Speare, E. G. *The Bronze Bow*

Boston: Houghton Mifflin
1961

ISBN: 0-440-99577-9

Daniel bar Jamin is a romantic and bold young member of a band of zealots living in first-century Palestine. He moves, talks and thinks with a fierce urgency, all directed toward the Romans who control his country. What Elizabeth Speare gives us in ***The Bronze Bow*** is a glimpse of the divided and turbulent society of occupied Palestine, a story with many parallels in our own day.

Speare takes Daniel on a circular journey toward maturity: he has left the home where his mother and father were wantonly slain by the conquerors and has joined a band of Palestinian guerrillas operating from the hills. But he must eventually return to that home, to the grandmother who is old and ill, and to his sister who has been traumatized by the crucifixion of her family. His sister's development, as well as his own, is characterized by indecision, withdrawal, joy, love, fear and determination, a convincing pastiche of human emotions.

Speare creates tension between Rosh, the bandit leader whom Daniel thinks has the answers to the country's subjugation, and another leader, Jesus, who is seen fleetingly in the novel but whose advocacy of nonviolence seems so at odds with Daniel's ideals. She succeeds in conveying the simmering sense of political injustice that pervades the land as well as the people's desire for a liberator, the latter in the figure of the crowd-gathering carpenter from Nazareth, who is met with either skepticism or belief.

Daniel is a peasant blacksmith whose world consists of the fields, the hills, village life and village ways. His adventures bring him into contact with the world of the wealthy in Capernaum. Speare portrays both worlds with accurate, sensuous and refined detail. The geography of the hills, the richness of the household of his friends Joel and his sister, as well as the sounds and smells of fishermen's docks, give a vivid picture of life in this area in the first century.

Speare never imposes a religious philosophy on her readers; she involves them in her character, Daniel, who is both fascinated and confused by a revolutionary figure so unlike the one he follows. Daniel is torn between violence and passive resistance, between longing and hating, between war and peace. Speare succeeds in involving her readers intensely in these conflicts through the depth of feeling of her characters, through their lively and credible dialogue, and through the detailed world of the first century.

Yep, L. — *Dragonwings*

New York: Harper and Row
1975
Paperback

ISBN: 0-064-40085-9

Awards:
The John Newberry Medal (1976)

Dragonwings is the story of Moon Shadow, an eight-year-old Chinese immigrant to California in the early 1900s. Moon Shadow sails to San Francisco to join his father, Windrider, whom he knows only through his weekly letters home and the kites he has left behind for him. Windrider is one of many Chinese who travelled to America and endured many hardships to send money back to their families in China. Although Windrider works in a laundry, his real interest is in mechanical devices. Eventually he becomes a repairman and a free-lance mechanic. His one dream is to build a flying machine and fly like a dragon. To this end father and son study aeronautical books and build model gliders. Dragonwings is the outcome of their study, effort and companionship. As Moon Shadow helps his father make his dream come true, he encounters both good and bad elements of the Chinese and white populations. Through his friendship with Miss Whitelaw, he learns to read and write in English, a useful skill that enables him to correspond with Orville and Wilbur Wright.

The author presents a unique perspective of the Chinese in America, including vivid descriptions of both Chinese community and the "demons" (whites who make it difficult for the immigrants). The confrontation of two cultures is presented in a balanced way: allusions to the periodic harassments of the Chinese are counterbalanced by the account of Miss Whitelaw's and Robin's acceptance of Moon Shadow and his father as friends. Yep's description of the San Francisco earthquake brings to life a tragic moment in history. The story is enriched by Chinese folklore and details of the problems of discrimination. The characters are well-developed and the pace of action holds the reader's interest. The relationship of father and son is presented with humour and compassion.

Historical Fiction

Grade 9

Hautzig, E.

The Endless Steppe: Growing Up in Siberia

Toronto: Fitzhenry and Whiteside Ltd.
1968
243 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-694-05608-7

The Endless Steppe is about a Jewish family from Poland and their five-year exile to Siberia during World War II. The reader experiences the horrors, fears, and struggles of the Rudomin family through the eyes of Esther, who is a young girl when the ordeal begins.

In June of 1941 the Rudomin family is forced to board a cattle car to an unknown destination. Esther, her parents and grandmother attempt to stay together and stay alive. They are sent to live outside a small village, Rubtsovsk, where they live in crowded barracks and dung huts. After an amnesty is declared, the Rudomin family moves into the village of Rubtsovsk where they hope work is available and living conditions tolerable. However, there is a shortage of housing, food, and work so once again they struggle to survive every day. Esther is a pillar of strength, especially for her grandmother who is often ready to give up. In the end, the entire family does return to Vilna, Poland, but Esther, who has learned the Russian language and developed an appreciation for the Russian classics, leaves part of herself behind.

The novel is written from a first-person point of view. Told with emotion, the story is inspiring, not gloomy.

Historical Fiction Grade 9

Montgomery, R. *Iceblink*

Agincourt, Holt Henry and
Company, Inc., 1941
Book Society of Canada Ltd.
1969
203 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-772-51081-4

When members of an Inuit tribe are starving, the worst crime anyone can be accused of is the theft of food. In ***Iceblink***, the last of the food, meant for the children, is stolen and Metak is accused of the crime. His punishment is banishment from the tribe. Lonely and distraught Metak and his dog, Kursuk, move from village to village. However, life in the village is disrupted when a Russian trawler comes to recruit as many Eskimos as possible to help with the hunt for otter furs. The Russians are unprepared for the hardships of the North and it is only with Metak's help that they do not all die of starvation, scurvy or exposure.

This novel is the story of survival in the North in the 1750s, and of a young man's struggle to prove his innocence and maturity. The novel is suspenseful and moves along briskly, keeping the interest of even the most reluctant reader. The book is divided into 20 chapters and each is filled with vivid images that leave the reader with an appreciation for the environment and culture of the North.

Historical Fiction

Grade 9

Skurzynski, G. — *Manwolf*

New York: Clarion Books, Tichnorand Fields, Houghton Mifflin
1981
173 pages Hardcover

ISBN: 0-395-30079-7

Set in Poland in the Middle Ages, ***Manwolf*** is the story of a peasant girl, Danusha, and her illegitimate son, Adam. Adam's father, the mysterious Count Reinmar, has a disfiguring disease, and Adam is born with the same disease. Because he is ridiculed by other children and adults believe he is a werewolf, Danusha flees to a monastery where she is comforted and given a cottage to live in. But Adam wishes to find a cure for the disease that has afflicted him. To this end he schemes to meet the young Queen Jadwiga, who is reputed to be a miracle worker. But his face scares the young queen and Adam is pursued by her guards for frightening her. He is caught and put on public exhibition until a servant of his father's recognizes the disease Adam has, realizes who Adam must be, and helps reunite Adam and Count Reinmar.

The book is divided into two parts: Danusha's story and Adam's story. Through Danusha's eyes readers become aware of the stigma attached to a young single mother during this period of history. Through Adam's eyes the reader becomes aware of a young man's search for his identity and his yearning to be accepted by society.

Skurzynski has based this novel on a disease called erthropoietic porphyria. There are 70 recorded cases of this disease in history. Victims of this disease have red bones, teeth and urine. Because victims are unable to tolerate the sun, they tend to grow hair wherever they have been exposed to the sun, giving them a werewolf-like appearance.

Park, R.

Playing Beatie Bow

Markham, Ontario: Penguin
1980
Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-31460-1

Awards:

Australian Children's Book of the Year Award, 1981

At 14, Abigail Kirk is a typical teen growing up in Sydney, Australia. When her mother tells her that they are going to move to Norway with her estranged father, Abigail is resentful and cannot understand her mother's intentions. Abigail often babysits, and while looking after Natalie, the two notice a strange girl watching a group of children playing a scary game, "Beatie Bow." When Abigail tries to speak to her, the little urchin races off into an older area of Sydney called "The Rocks." Abigail, curious about the strange child, chases after her, only to find herself in the surroundings of 19th-century Sydney, wearing the clothing of the time. Abigail rushes towards the candy store into which the little girl disappeared and is knocked out by a tall man brandishing a scimitar and shouting curses as he rushes through the doorway. When she awakens, Abigail has a sore head and a badly sprained ankle, and discovers that she is in the home of a 19th-century Scottish family who seem to be expecting her. In order to return to her world, Abigail undergoes many difficult trials which give her the experience and maturity she needs to cope with the changes in her life: surviving the medical practices of the time; looking after, and eventually saving an invalid boy from a fire; being rescued from an unsavory fate in a brothel; discovering that Beatie Bow is the name of the urchin she chased into this other world; falling in love; and discovering the connection between the two worlds of which Abigail finds herself a part.

Told from the position of a close observer, ***Playing Beatie Bow*** is the intricate weaving of two worlds into one. The novel is carefully plotted and allows the reader to easily move from one world to the other. Not only does Park give us a realistic picture of the concerns of modern teens, but she also allows us to become part of 19th-century Australia, with its own particular problems. The novel deals with themes of love, loyalty, coping positively with problems and the condition of families today.

Garfield, L. *Smith*

Harmondsworth, England:
Penguin
1968

ISBN: 0-140-30349-9

Through this period picture of 18th-century London, Leon Garfield establishes himself as the children's Dickens. ***Smith*** is the story of a street urchin and pickpocket. It is a romantic, fanciful yarn, rooted in the mean life of the city, Newgate jail, and the taverns, hovels and households around it.

The plot revolves around Smith's attempts to understand a document he has stolen from a man who is later murdered. Tension and suspense are created at the outset, in the dimly lit streets where Smith runs errands for the prisoners of Newgate. The book is, throughout, alive with colour and action: an escape from prison through the chimneys, a "stand and deliver" encounter with highwaymen, a terrible fight in a churchyard.

But this is not merely a book. Garfield takes his reader to the well-springs of human feeling through Smith's relationship with an old blind magistrate. Together, they are required to use what strength and wits they have against villany. Smith thinks he is fighting for personal gain, Mr. Mansfield for abstract justice: each discovers that compassion has also, and chiefly, moved them.

Garfield's novels appeal to young readers for their strong narrative line and the splendidly detailed backcloth he paints of the historical period in which his well-developed characters operate. Theatricality, melodrama and fast pace are part of the fabric. Smith searches not only for his identity but also for some kind of moral certainty in a world made bewildering by the duplicity or sacrifice of adults. Garfield believes in the resilience and robustness of his young readers as they become aware of the workings of the adult world. Fiction, he believes should help the process along. ***Smith*** is quite simply, a good book that will challenge and reward its readers.

Holman, F. *The Wild Children*

New York: Penguin A Puffin Book
1985
An ALA Best Book for Young Adults
149 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-31930-1

The Wild Children is the powerful story of a group of Russian children who, in the early 1920s, are left homeless and are forced to fend for themselves. Twelve-year-old Alex, who sleeps in a hidden storeroom, awakes to find that all of his family members have been arrested by the secret police. In an attempt to find safety and security, Alex makes his way to Moscow only to find that his uncle has also been arrested. Alone and destitute, Alex watches other homeless children steal food. In order to survive the cold, he joins the group of homeless children who band together in packs. While living in abandoned buildings and caves, Alex and his group steal, rob and beg but they form a unique bond that ties them together as they share their food and shelter. When food becomes scarce and the weather unrelenting, the group moves southward by jumping a train and risking their lives as they travel in precarious positions underneath the train. Alex makes contact with his teacher's brother who devises a plan for the group to escape to Finland where they can prepare for a better life that will eventually take them to America.

Holman, who interviewed surviving "wild children" for this novel, presents a gripping story of a group of children who have a definite will to survive. She explores the themes of caring, courage, death, hope, perseverance and man's ability to be flexible. Holman's strong characterization and dramatic writing style combine to give us insight into a way of life that few of us ever encounter.

This is a novel of adventure and survival; a novel that brings to life the unending struggle to adapt to a life filled with intolerable conditions.

Mystery

Grade 9

Doyle, A. C.

The Hounds of the Baskervilles

England: George Newnes, 1902
reprint
Markham, Ontario: Penguin,
Puffin Classics
1987
Paperback

ISBN: 0-140-35064-0

In this classic mystery set in 19th-century England, Sherlock Holmes and his trustworthy companion, Dr. Watson, are faced with discovering the truth behind the curse on the wealthy Baskerville family—a massive "hound from Hell" who has plagued the family for generations. When Sir Charles Baskerville dies mysteriously on the grounds of Baskerville Hall with a horrifying look of terror frozen on his face, Holmes and Watson are called in to discover the cause of death and to prevent the new owner, Henry Baskerville from meeting a similar fate. Watson and Holmes are faced with several obstacles to their eventual discovery of the evil person responsible for the death: superstitious accounts of the evil hound that haunts the moors at night, a man who claims that his wife is his sister, suspicious servants, an escaped convict, flashing lights upon the moor, and the brooding, foggy atmosphere of the lonely English moors.

Although some parts of the book have little dialogue, the narrator, Watson, is most entertaining in telling the story. Doyle also uses an interesting letter format to narrate much of the book. ***The Hounds of the Baskervilles*** explores themes of good and evil, the machinations of clever people, and the possible achievements of deductive reasoning while unraveling a compelling mystery. The story, written in the style of the 19th-Century writer, may seem rather descriptive and "long-winded" to students who enjoy action-packed mysteries. However, this is a carefully crafted novel of plot and suspense that will have the reader trying to discover the murderer along with Holmes and Watson before the evil person strikes again.

Carleton, B. O. — *Mystery of the Witches' Bridge*

Toronto: Scholastic Book Services
1967
Paperback

ISBN: 0-590-41398-8

Young Dan Pride, an orphan for three years, comes to live with his eccentric and unwelcoming Uncle Julian on the family estate, located on a coastal salt marsh of the eastern United States. Dan soon learns of a feud over the mysterious disappearance of a considerable sum of money supposedly taken by a neighbouring family, the Bishops and of the bizarre death of Dan's grandfather. The feud has embittered Uncle Julian toward the Bishops, the townspeople, and toward life. Dan decides to solve the mystery of the unrecovered money and to prove forever that the Bishop family is at the root of his family's problems. Dan faces many obstacles in discovering the truth about the past and simultaneously discovers many personal strengths: the mysterious "fiddler's fog"; friends who seem to betray him; Uncle Julian's massive crippled black dog, Caligan; a strange hermit of great wisdom; and secret passageways.

Carleton tantalizes the reader with some answers to the puzzle, while at the same time creating new questions and doubts in the reader's mind. The writer creates a suspenseful mystery, but also explores themes of pride, forgiveness, self-confidence and trust. Although salt marshes and dense fogs are not within the experience of many Albertan teens, the author's detailed portrait of the eerie setting is clear and casts a brooding atmosphere of mystery and fear. Seen through the eyes of a close observer, Carleton sets the tale in a world shrouded by mystery and suspense and invites the reader to unravel the carefully crafted plot along with Dan.

Mystery

Grade 9

Hillerman, T.

People of Darkness

New York, N.Y., Harper and Row
1988
Paperback

ISBN: 0-060-80950-7

People of Darkness begins with several people being blown to pieces by a car bomb. It is obvious that the people who are killed are not the intended victims. As Hillerman lets the story unfold we are drawn into a world filled with lies. The reader also is introduced to elements of a society he or she may not be familiar with.

This novel allows the student to explore the Navajo society in New Mexico. The protagonist is Sergeant Jim Chee of the Navajo Tribal Police and also a Navajo. He has been asked to investigate the theft of a rich man's keepsake box. The man's wife believes it has been stolen by members of the People of Darkness (a secret society associated with The Native American Church).

As Chee becomes involved with the mystery he finds that almost everyone he talks to seems to have something in their past that they do not want discovered. Whenever Chee asks questions, death is not far behind and it only serves to complicate the puzzle.

Hillerman makes the cat and mouse game more interesting by telling part of the story from the point of view of an assassin who prides himself on his ability to commit "perfect murders." It is this alternate viewpoint which makes the mystery so enthralling.

The physical setting of the story is important and as readers follow the puzzle they cannot help but learn of the various tribes and customs of the local people. Hillerman brings this world to life and invites readers to view the panorama of New Mexico in their mind's eye.

Non-fiction

Grade 9

Leder, J.M.

Dead Serious: A Book for Teenagers About Teenage Suicide

New York: MacMillan Publishing Company, Authenlum
1987
144 pages Hardcover

ISBN: 0-440-95777-X

This book about suicide combines "What to watch for' and "Where to get help" information, with the hard reality of case histories, narratives, and interviews with teenagers who have attempted suicide. It is truly a book "for" and "about" teenagers, suggesting ways of coping, of being sensitive to warning signals, and of knowing what to do—and what not to do—when dealing with others.

The blend of information and anecdote is accessible and intriguing. Several sections are presented as dialogue. The eight chapters deal with specific aspects of the topic. The overall presentation serves as a model of how students might convey information with support from personal experience.

Suggested reading, both fiction and non-fiction, is included. Other sources of information and agencies for assistance cited are American. The best source of information in Alberta is Dr. R. Dyck, Provincial Suicidologist, Mental Health Diseases, Alberta Health, Seventh Street Plaza, 10030-107 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T5J 3E4, 427-2816.

In an honest, yet sympathetic manner, Leder presents and develops characters for whom we care, then discusses their problems and the anxiety their families and friends experience.

Non-fiction

Grade 9

Doig, D.

Mother Teresa: Her People and Her Work

Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., 1976
reprint Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd., Fount Paperbacks
1978
158 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-006-25333-4

Based on and including articles originally published by Doig in "The Statesman," a leading Indian newspaper, this book documents the people and the work of Mother Teresa's ministry. Enriched by black-and-white and colour photographs, this account of love and compassion among the poorest of the poor is both heart breaking and heart warming.

Since many were interviewed in the compilation of this material and much of the material was written as shorter works for different purposes, the accounts of Mother Teresa's life and work inevitably overlap. The repetition of some incidents helps students feel comfortable with the text, and provides an interesting comparison of point of view.

Of special interest in the presentation is the use of a prologue and epilogue to frame the nine chapters—the first eight being narrative while the last explores the author's understanding of his subjects' attitudes on topics including life, death, faith and sin. A chronological listing of events in Mother Teresa's life is included.

Doig's journalistic approach is characterized by an intense admiration for this humble woman and by his knowledge and understanding of the people whose lives are touched by her work.

Non-fiction

Grade 9

Wright, G.

Sons and Seals: A Voyage to the Ice

St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1984, reprint
Halifax: Formac Publishing Company Limited, Goodread Biographies
1986
126 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-887-80142-0

Sons and Seals really is a "voyage to the ice." It takes us into the midst of the hunt as Guy Wright records his experiences as a working sealer. The book contains a short history of sealing; an unbiased, personal account of life aboard a sealing ship; Wright's interpretation of the sealers' motivation; and, speculation about the end of sealing and its aftermath.

Wright signed on as a sealer in 1979 to collect data for his Masters thesis. Five chapters of this eight-chapter book are told in first-person narrative, as Wright recounts the voyage honestly and sympathetically. He describes the excitement of the hunt, its practical details, and its perils. He describes his fears, the dangers he and his fellow sealers face, and their courage in pursuit of a livelihood. He also relates the fears and suspicion of experienced hands who feel threatened by his presence, worrying that he is there to sabotage their hunt.

Photographs and illustrations are included. An appendix contains Canada's Policy on Seals and Sealing, the World Wildlife Funds Position on the 1982 Seal Hunt, and a letter from the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society. There is also a selected bibliography.

Guy Wright learned about the seal hunt and the sealers first-hand; students share that learning through this fascinating and sometimes grisly account. The author supports the view on the banning of seal hunting although he is prepared to discuss the position of the fur industry.

Hubert, C. *Dreamspeaker*

Toronto: Clarke, Irvin & Company
1978
reprint Toronto: Avon Inc.
1981
122 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-380-56622-2

Awards:
1978 Gibson Literary award

Dreamspeaker is a tragedy. Peter, a young teenager, is the product of a shattered childhood and a series of foster homes. As the story opens he is confined in "the facility" and is possessed by some unseen evil. Terrified by haunting nightmares and recurring seizures, he flees. He is found near death, by Dreamspeaker, an old Indian shaman, in the forests of British Columbia. The shaman and his companion the mute He-Who-Would-Sing, care for Peter and begin the process of giving the boy new life.

Finally, however, Peter is recaptured and sent back to the "facility." It is more than the three protagonists can handle and all three of them die, Peter by his own hands.

The author is a well-known Canada poet and screen writer, Anne Cameron, who is white, but she manages to infuse the novel with a native sensibility that has a distinct authenticity. The lesson about social justice is somewhat heavy-handed, with the death of all three protagonists, but it is a gripping story that is impossible to put down. Cameron has effectively woven west coast Indian mythology into the story, highlighting the compassionate nature of the Indian guardians, the Stlalcum, and using them as a foreshadowing device for the end of Peter's life.

Gibbons, K. *Ellen Foster*

Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill
1987
146 pages Hardcover

ISBN: 0-912-69752-0

Ellen Foster tells her own story in this warm and caring first novel by Kaye Gibbons. Ellen is left to coexist with her alcoholic father after the suicide of her mother. She manages to cope initially but is forced to seek a new life at the tender age of 11. She moves from teacher to grandmother to aunt before finding a home where she is wanted and loved.

Her struggles with sexual and physical abuse, alcohol, prejudice and, finally, love are clearly articulated through first-person, stream-of-consciousness narration. Ellen's story is all the more horrifying, yet compelling, as we experience it through her eyes and her thoughts. This is a story of quiet triumph over the grim realities that life has dealt this child.

At times it may be difficult for inexperienced readers to maintain interest; this book will initially challenge students' repertoire of reading strategies. However, the strength of Ellen's inner voice, her courage, her humour and her wisdom win over the reader. The eventual recognition by students of a style similar to their own when keeping journals or making diary entries is significant. It is perhaps not what students expect as a novel for study, but is ideally suited for a response journal or listening log (see "Responding to Literature" section). If this approach is used one should consider the background of the students in the class. There may be students who have or who are experiencing similar problems. These students should be consulted prior to any group or class discussion or public assignments.

Paterson, K. *Jacob Have I Loved*

New York: Avon Books
1980
Paperback

ISBN: 0-380-56599-8

Awards:
- Winner of the Newbury Medal 1981
- An ALA Notable Book
- A School Library Journal Best Book of the Year

Jacob Have I Loved is the insightful account of Sara Louise Bradshaw who is passing through her troubled teenage years. Insecure, lonely and full of hatred, Louise feels trapped and unloved. To make matters worse, she lives in the "shadow" of her twin sister, Caroline, who gets the better schooling, all of her mother's attention and the love and admiration of Louise's friends. As a result, Louise sets out to learn the ways of the local oyster and crab fishermen. Hard work temporarily offers her the opportunity to gain her father's attention and to feel worthwhile. However, as she grows older, Louise realizes that she must make up her own mind to do something purposeful with her life and to admit to her desire to leave the confinement of the small Chesapeake Bay island. Thinking that she would never understand or follow in her mother's footsteps, Louise overcomes her fear and hesitation as she finds the courage to leave the island to find her true identity.

Paterson presents an intimate portrait of the delicacy and trauma of adolescence and explores the themes of family relationships, sibling rivalry, love, friendship, death, maturity and finding one's identity. Through dialogue and description, Paterson recreates the reality of growing up, the misunderstandings and the sorting out of true feelings.

In addition to evoking the atmosphere of the remote island and the stark simplicity of its life, Patterson has developed a story of great dramatic power. "Wheeze," as Louise is called, is always candid in recounting her emotional experiences and reactions. At the same time, the island characters come to life in skillful, terse dialogue. The everyday realism, the frequent touches of humour, and the implications of the narrative have a power of their own. The Biblical allusions of Jacob and Louise add to the meaning of the story and illuminate the prolonged crises in Louise's life. The ending offers the reader a peaceful sense of harmony.

Fox, P. *The Moonlight Man*

New York: Bradbury Press
1986
Paperback

ISBN: 0-027-35480-6

Related Resources:
Slave Dancer
One-eyed Cat

In ***Moonlight Man***, Paula Fox writes about Catherine, aged 15, who is attending boarding school in Montreal. Catherine has lived with her mother since her parents' divorce, with only sporadic contact with her father. This summer she is to spend two months with her father while her mother has a holiday with her new husband in a remote area of Scotland. Initially, her father neglects to make arrangements for her to travel to Nova Scotia and Catherine is left to fend for herself at the boarding school. Catherine spends a month with her father in Digby, Nova Scotia, and learns to cope with his alcoholism. In the process she learns a great deal about human nature, forgiveness and herself. The book concludes with Catherine realizing that her somewhat romantic view of her absentee father has changed. She becomes resigned to his alcoholism and recognizes her father for what he is worth.

While this well-written story is set in Canada, Paula Fox writes from an American, urban perspective. The book deals with an issue that students may have experienced directly or indirectly. The story provides sufficient detail but does not focus on alcoholism. Rather, the emphasis is on what the characters perceive about the events and their own actions. This is a book that may help students recognize and understand their feelings and by extension the feelings of others.

Cross, J. *On the Edge*

New York: Holiday House
1985
Hardcover

ISBN: 0-823-40559-1

Tug is attacked and kidnapped from his London home by a strange couple connected with an international terrorist group. They take him to a remote cottage in Derbyshire, England, where the couple uses brainwashing techniques to convince Tug that they are his parents. Tug experiences disorientation through food and sleep deprivation, the constant droning of a piece of music played over and over, the threat of armed weapons, fear, and psychological and physical violence. Bombarded by constant reminders that his name is Philip and that he is their son on holiday in a rented cottage in Derbyshire, Tug becomes increasingly insecure about who he really is. Meanwhile, Jinny, a girl who lives near the cottage, sees and hears the late night arrival of the "family." She is convinced there is something wrong with the family and mounts her own investigation of the situation. Jinny becomes even more convinced of wrong doing when she meets the woman kidnapper, Mrs. Doyle, who tells a lie about her "family's" arrival in Derbyshire. Jinny eventually figures out that Philip is really the missing boy, Liam Shakespeare, son of the well-known television journalist, Harriet Shakespeare. Jinny eventually convinces the police and Harriet Shakespeare that she is not making up a prank and that Liam, Tug, is really in Derbyshire. She is instrumental in Tug's eventual rescue.

On the Edge is the story of two teens who reach deep within themselves for strength to cope with a terrifying situation. The narrator, an omniscient observer, reports the novel's events in diary form with each day of Tug's captivity as a chapter and the times of important events are used as sub-headings. Although there is physical and psychological violence in the book, the outcome of the story is positive and Tug does not lose his identity to the two terrorists. In a world where terrorism is on the increase, this story allows students to begin to understand that terrorism affects ordinary people; the story invites discussion about this social problem. The novel also deals with family love, perseverance in the face of great difficulty, the strengths and weaknesses of the human psyche when under great pressure, and learning to like yourself for who you are. The novel is carefully plotted; the separate experiences of Tug, Jinny and Harriet being carefully woven together to form the fabric of the story.

LeGuin, U.K. *Very Far Away From Anywhere Else*

Toronto: Bantam Books, 1976
87 pages Paperback

ISBN: 0-553-25396-4

This short book may take many of Ursula LeGuin's dedicated followers by surprise. It is her first piece of realistic fiction and is as sensitive and absorbing as her ***Earthsea*** trilogy. It is the story of a relationship that is neither complex nor convaluted in plot. Indeed it is low key, but is powerful in the lasting impact on readers because LeGuin writes in a subtle yet forthright way about conformity, hypocrisy, and especially anti-intellectualism.

Owen Griffiths is a teenager, unusually intelligent, introverted, and fated to be an outsider. He becomes friends with Natalie Field, a girl whose own intellect, ideals and ambitions are as strong as his own. She is an accomplished violinist and pianist, practicing assiduously and already giving music lessons. Their friendship is vital, fed by their shared interest in music, their somewhat different approaches to life, and their delight in conversation; each fills a void in the other's life. An inevitable emotional climax drives them apart when Owen confuses friendship, love and sex.

LeGuin takes a stand, in this novel, against the "sexual engineers, whether they're scientists or salesmen" who try to manipulate attitudes toward love, sex, and friendship. She speaks strongly in this book about all three because the relationship between Owen and Natalie has in it the reality of many teenage relationships. The thoughts and feelings that are discussed by Owen and Natalie, that are worked through with bitterness or with humour but all with sensitivity, provide an articulation of feeling that is honest and insightful. For some readers the book may come as a revelation that there are relationships fueled by ideas and ambition; for others it may provide welcome reassurance that there is more to a relationship than the advertising man would have us believe.

Asimov, I. — *Foundation*

New York: Street and Smith Publications, Inc., 1941. compiled.
New York: Gnome Press. 1951. reprint
New York: Ballantine Books 1983
Paperback

ISBN: 0-345-33627-5

Awards:
Hugo Award for Best Science Fiction Series of all Time

Related Reources:
Foundation and the Empire
Second Foundation
Foundation's Edge

Robot Series
The Caves of Steel
The Naked Sun

Foundation is perhaps one of the most well-known pieces of Speculative Fiction ever published. It began in 1941 as a series of short stories published in the Science Fiction periodical ***Astounding***. In 1951 ***Foundation*** was first published as a novel; it became, with the two other novels in the series, the most famous of Isaac Asimov's works. In 1966 ***The Foundation Series*** won the Hugo award for the best all-time series of novels. (It's competition was Tolkien's ***Lord of the Rings***.)

Foundation is comprised of five individual stories told in linear fashion. Each story deals with the decline of the Galactic Empire. The connecting link in the five stories is the psychohistorian Hari Seldon. Using the science of psychohistory he has developed a plan that will shorten the interval of decay and waste between the fall of the Empire and the rise of the Foundation, to a period of 1000 years.

The addictive quality of the ***Foundation*** series is that it allows the reader to follow the development of a new empire from the average person's perspective. All the protagonists in ***Foundation*** are pragmatists: men who believe that "Violence is the last refuge of the incompetent."

Since the novel is written in the third person with limited omniscience, it allows Asimov to develop mysteries and forces the reader to try and solve the puzzles presented before the characters do.

This is not a novel of aliens, monsters, or superhuman heroics. It is the story of "future history," of the decline, fall and ultimate rise of galactic empires.

Brooks, T. *Magic Kingdom for Sale/Sold*

New York: Ballantine Books
1986
Paperback

ISBN: 0-345-31757-2

Magic Kingdom for Sale/Sold is a story of loss and recovery from loss. Ben Holiday is still in mourning over the death of his wife when he discovers an advertisement for a magic kingdom in a catalogue addressed to her. As Ben investigates he is drawn into the unlikely kingdom of Landover with its incompetent wizards, evil warlocks and cooperative dragons.

Although Ben buys Landover as a means of escaping his almost overwhelming sense of loss, he finds that he has just traded one set of problems for another. As he learns to cope and rule his kingdom he also learns more about his own attitudes towards life.

Brooks uses many traditional names and terms in his story and these give it a sense of authenticity. He allows the story to unfold and spends a great deal of time in describing the setting. This style of story telling is often ignored by today's writers as they concentrate more on the action and character at the expense of the setting. The author follows Ben and allows us to understand how he feels about the incidents that arise. This allows the reader to discover what motivates Ben and how he changes as the story unfolds.

Brooks has created a world that is logical and consistent. The story may be approached as a modern fantasy, an adventure or as a study of a man who comes to terms with the loss of someone he loves. The use of language and complexity of the plot move it beyond mere escapist literature.

APPENDIX A
Genre Definitions

Classics

Classics comprise a persuasive genre with universal themes. These books have survived at least one generation of readers because they deal with themes that are perennially entertaining and meaningful. They are always first-class quality literature and recognized as models of such. Examples of classics on our list are Asimov's ***Foundation***, Montgomery's ***Anne of Green Gables***, and Doyle's ***Hounds of the Baskervilles***.

Realistic Fiction

Realistic novels invite readers into times and places in which seemingly real people cope with incidents, events and relationships that are plausible.

Animal Stories

In simplest terms, animal stories are those selections of literature that feature animals as the central characters. Although they may involve humans, the stories are primarily about animals and their struggles to survive.

There are three main categories into which most animal stories fit. Realistic animal stories allow the reader to enter into the animal's wilderness lives with minimal human intrusion.

In the second type, the author explores man's relationship with animals, both wild and domestic.

In third type human characteristics are attributed to the animals. Within the story, they take on "human" roles.

Mystery

Mysteries involve the reader in the process of detection. Whether they present a series of familiar events, cognitive games or enticing questions, these books engage readers in the discovery of an underlying series of events that can help them predict the outcome of the story.

Non-fiction

Non-fiction works are stories of actual people and events, ideas and opinions. Based upon facts and reality, non-fiction includes such types of writing as autobiography, biography, the essay and history.

Speculative Fiction

Speculative fiction deals with alternative realities. The world of speculative fiction is not our world, although the two may have surface similarities. Speculative fiction deals with the protagonist's reaction to, or ability to deal with, this other reality. Since speculative fiction, more than any other type of fiction, demands that the reader suspend disbelief, it is imperative that the writer construct a reality that is internally consistent and appears true in all situations.

Myth	Myth attempts to make understandable such events as birth, death, changing seasons, or the origin of fire by explaining them as part of a primitive, unconscious order in the universe. These explanations are not scientific but imaginative, all their truth is unquestioned because they are so closely associated with sacred belief.
Historical Fiction	Historical fiction recreates the people, places, and problems of the past. The story it tells should be so absorbing that the historical background details fall into a properly secondary place to the basic purpose: fulfilling all the criteria of good fiction while telling a good story.

APPENDIX B
Challenges

Challenges to book selection are occasionally a problem. Teachers should be prepared to face them when they arise. Challenges may be based on the ideas in a book, the maturity required for understanding them, or the language used to express those ideas. Since the school is only a reflection of society it must represent various points of view and make available resources that allow students to explore those points of view which are within their understanding.

If someone challenges the material that you have selected you must be prepared to justify your reasons for the selection. Here are some ideas from the National Council of Teachers of English. They have adopted a position known as "THE RIGHT TO READ."

THE RIGHT TO READ

> *"The right to read, like all rights guaranteed or implied within our constitutional tradition, can be used wisely or foolishly. In many ways, education is an effort to improve the quality of choices open to man. But to deny the freedom of choice in fear that it may be unwisely used is to destroy the freedom itself. For this reason, we reject the right of individuals or groups to limit the freedom of choice of others or to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.*
>
> *"The right of any individual not just to read but to read whatever he wants to read is basic to a democratic society. This right is based on an assumption that the educated and reading man possesses judgment and understanding and can be trusted with the determination of his own actions. In effect, the reading man is freed from the bonds of discovering all things and all facts and all truths through his own direct experiences, for his reading allows him to meet people, debate philosophies, and experience events far beyond the narrow confines of his own experience.*

"In selecting books for reading by young people, English teachers consider the contribution which each work may make to the evaluation of the reader, its aesthetic value, its honesty, its readability for a particular group of students, and its appeal to adolescents. English teachers, however, may use different works for different purposes. The criteria for choosing a work to be read by an entire class are somewhat different from the criteria for choosing works to be read by small groups...

"But the teacher selects books; he does not censor them. Selection implies that a teacher is free to choose this or that work depending upon the purpose to be achieved...Censorship implies that certain works are not open to selection...

"Many works contain isolated elements to which some individuals or groups may object. (The literary artist seeks truth, as he is able to see and feel it. As a seeker of truth, he must necessarily challenge at times the common beliefs or values of a society; he must comment on people's actions and values and the frequent discrepancy between what they purport to live by and what they do live by). Moreover, the value and impact of any literary work must be examined as a whole and not in part—the impact of the entire work being more important than the words, phrases, or incidents out of which it is made.

"...But youth is the age of revolt, and the times today show much of the world in revolt. To pretend otherwise is to ignore a reality made clear to young people and adults alike on television and radio, in newspapers and magazines. English teachers must be free to employ books, classic or contemporary, which do not lie to the young about the perilous but wondrous times we live in..."

(***The Right To Read***. National Council of Teachers of English, 1111 Kenyn Road, Urbana, Illinois. 61801)

The adoption of a position such as this should be backed up by policies for resource selection and book challenges. If your school system does not yet have these policies it would be wise to invest the time to develop them.

Here are several ways—gathered from a variety of sources—to help prevent differences of opinions from becoming full-blown controversies.

1. Determine, formulate, update and circulate as written policy, guidelines for selection and purchase of material.

2. Write a reasonable and workable policy on how to handle complaints about instructional material.

3. Initiate and maintain a public awareness campaign about what resources are selected.

4. Involve citizens in the book selection process.

5. Give objecting parents and students options.

6. Make sure complaints about books are put in writing.

7. Check up on complainants who receive the forms but don't turn them in.

8. Train all "frontline school personnel" in how to handle textbook queries and complaints.

In the classroom the teacher can usually prevent most challenges by giving students, who express concern with a particular title, a list of three or four titles to choose from. This will usually defuse most concerns that arise.

The Controversial Issues Policy, 1972, should be used as a guide in presenting various points of view about an issue raised in a novel or piece of non-fiction. In part this policy states "In principle, it is an objective of the Alberta educational system to develop students' capacities to think clearly, reason logically, examine all issues and reach sound judgments." Frequently these types of works present only one or two viewpoints on an issue. In discussing the issue in class, teachers should encourage the discussion of the other viewpoints as well.

APPENDIX C
Background Articles on Genres

A. **ANIMAL STORIES**	1.	***Canadian Children's Literature***: "The Canadian Animal Story": vol. 1 no. 2 (Summer 1975); Special issue on this topic.
	2.	Magee, William H. "The Animal Story: A Canadian Specialty": ***Canadian Children's Literature***: vol. 14 (1979): 67-69.
	3.	Tully, Deborah. "Nature Stories - Unrealistic Fiction": ***Elementary English***: 51 (March 1974): 348-352.
B. **BIOGRAPHY**	1.	Carr, J. "What Do We Do About Bad Biographies?": ***School Library Journal***: 27 (May 1981): 19-22.
	2.	Stott, Jon. "Biography for Children": ***Children's Literature***: 3 (1974): 245-248.
C. **FANTASY**	1.	Alexander, Lloyd. "High Fantasy and Heroic Romance": ***Horn Book***: 47 (December 1971): 577-584.
	2.	Alexander, Lloyd. "Substance and Fantasy": ***School Library Journal***: 13 (December 1966): 19-21.
	3.	***Canadian Children's Literature***: 15-16 (1980); Special issue on fantasy.
	4.	Hunter, Mollie. "One World": ***Horn Book*** Part I, 51 (December 1975): 557-563. Part II, 52 (February 1976): 32-38.
D. **HISTORICAL FICTION**	1.	Burton, Hesten. "The Writing of Historical Novels": ***Horn Book***: 45 (June 1969): 271-277.
	2.	Collier, Christoper. "Criteria for Historical Fiction": ***School Library Journal***: 28 (August 1982): 32-33.
	3.	Trease, Geoffrey. "The Historical Novelist at Work": ***Children's Literature in Education***: no. 7 (March 1972): 5-16.
E. **MYSTERY**	1.	Billman, Carol. "The Child Reader as Sleuth": ***Children's Literature in Education***: 15 (Spring 1984): 30-41.
F. **REALISTIC FICTION**	1.	Egoff, Sheila. "Realistic Fiction": ***Thursday's Child: Trends and Patterns in Contemporary Children's Literature***: Chicago, IL: American Library Association (1981): 31-65.

2. Paterson, Gary. "Perspectives on the New Realism in Children's Literature"; ***Canadian Children's Literature*** No. 25 (1982): 26-32.

3. Westall, Robert. "How Real Do You Want Your Realism?"; ***Signal***: 28 (January 1979): 34-46.

G. SCIENCE FICTION

1. Bereit, Virginia. "The Genre of Science Fiction"; ***Elementary English***; 46 (November 1969): 895-900.

2. ***Children's Literature in Education***: (Winter 1983); Special Issue.

3. Egoff, Sheila. "Science Fiction"; ***Thursday's Child: Trends and Patterns in Contemporary Children's Literature***: Chicago, IL: American Library Association (1981); 130-158.

APPENDIX D

These resources may be used for locating reviews of the annotated material or as aids in the development of specific lists for individual schools or classes.

Canadian Reviewing Sources

CCL: Canadian Children's Literature/Literature Canadienne pour la Jeunesse. Canadian Children's Press, Box 335, Guelph, ON, N1H 6K5 Canada (519) 824-4120. Ed-Publ, Mary Rubio; Circulation Manager, Barbara Connolly. Criticism and reviews of Canadian books for children and young adults. Book reviews Ind Abs Online: Can. Ind. CPI, CLI 0319-0080;1975;Q $16; $5/copy, Circulation 1,500; adv: b/w $120; 96 pp; 5% ads No Color Journal.

U.S. and Canadian Reviewing Sources

CM: A Reviewing Journal of Canadian Materials. Canadian Library Association, 200 Elgin Street, #602, Ottawa, ON K2P 1L5 Canada (613) 232-9625. Ed, Elizabeth Morton; Publ, Laurie Bowes; Circulation Manager, Terry Smith. Reviews of materials produced in Canada, in all media for schools. 0821-1450 1971; BM $30; $6/copy; Circulation 1,800; Adv: b/w $200 8 ½ X 11 Offset 64 pp. Journal.

CANADIAN BOOKS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LIVRES CANADIENS POUR LA JEUNESSE. (Text in English and French) 1976 biennial. Canada $17.95. University of Toronto Press, Front Campus, Toronto, Ontario M5S 1A6, Canada, Telephone (416) 667-7791. (Subs to: Publications Order Department, 5201 Dufferin Street, Downsview, Ontario M3H 5T8) Editors Andre and Ann Gagnon. Circulation 1,500.

EMERGENCY LIBRARIAN DYAD SVCS. Box 46258, Station G, Vancouver, BC V6R 4G6 Canada (604) 734-0255. Editor, Carol-Ann Haycock; Publisher, Ken Haycock; Advertising Director, Dana Sheehan; Circulation Manager, Donna Goldhawke. For school and public libraries; thought provoking and lively. Book reviews Ind/Abs Online: CPI, CMT, LL, CEI 0315-8888 1973 5x/yer. $45.59/copy; Circulation 5,500; Subscriptions 4,200; Adv: b/w $500 8½ X 11 Offset 72 pp. 16% ads Color-2 Jour. Available on: film fiche.

CHILDREN'S BOOK NEWS. Children's Book Centre, 229 College Street, W., 5 Floor, Toronto, Ontario M5T 1R4 Canada (416) 597-1331. Editor, Peter Carver; Art Director, Blair Kerrigna. Information on Canadian children's books, reviews, interviews, new listings, general information. 0705-0038 1978; Q Free Circulation (100% Contribution) - 40,000; Subs 12,500 No Adv 8 ½ X 11; 8 pp. No Color Newsl.

U.S. and Canadian Reviewing Sources

BOOKLIST (The Booklist). American Library Association. 50 E. Huron Street. Division Journal Marketing. Chicago, IL 60611 (312) 944-6780. Editor, Art; Director, Paul Brawley; Advertising Director, Danea Rush; Circulation Manager, Robert Nelson; A selective buying guide to new books, films, filmstrips, recordings, and other media intended for public libraries, school libraries, and media centers. 0006-7385. 1905. 10x/year; $40; $2.25/copy; Circulation 32,300; Adv: b/w $1,450; 8 3/8 X 11; Web 72 pp. Color - 4 magazine. Available on: film.

BOOKMARK. children's literature in review with related activities for preschoolers through young adults. 1977. 2/year $10; c/o Jane Bingham, Oakland University, School of Human and Educational Services, Rochester, MI 48063. TELEPHONE (313) 370-3015. Editors, Jane Bingham, Gloria Blatt; bk. rev. Circulation 1,000. Former titles: In Review: Books for Children and Young People with Related Activites and Children's Literature in Review.

BULLETIN OF THE CENTER FOR CHILDREN'S BOOKS. University of Chicago Press, 5720 S. Woodlawn Avenue, Chicago, IL 60637 (312) 702-7600. Editor, Betsy Hearne; Advertising Director, Cheryl Jones; Circulation Manager, Orlie Higgins. Evaluation and analyses of children's books according to objective critical standards. Bk. revs. 0008-9036; 1947; 11x/year; $24 ind. $27 inst; $2.50/copy; Circulation 8,000; Adv: b/w $200; 6 5/8 X 9 1/2 Sheetfed; 22 pp. No Color Jour.

CHILDREN'S BOOK REVIEW INDEX. Gale Research Inc., Book Tower, Dept. 77748, Detroit, MI 48277-0748 (800) 223-4253. Editor, Barbara Beach. Based on Gale's Book Review Index (q.v.) cites all children's book reviews that are cited in BRI, which indexes reviews in over 325 periodicals and newspapers. 11975 A $85/copy. No Adv 400pp. Dir.

CHILDREN'S CATALOG. 1909 quinquennial (with a. supplements) $54. H.W. Wilson Company, 950 University Avenue, Bronx, NY 10452. Telephone 212-588-8400. Editor, Juliette Yaakov, bk. rev.

HORN BOOK MAGAZINE. Horn Book, Inc., 31 St. James Avenue, Park Square, Boston, MA 02116 (617) 482-5198. Editor, Anita Silvey; Publisher, Thomas Todd; Advertising Director, Amy Cohn; Circulation Manager, Deb Taylor. Reviews of children's, young adult books. Articles, news & information of children's book world. Book reviews 0018-5078. 1924. BM $32 $5.50/copy. Circulation 21,000. Newstand 1,200. Subs 17,000. Intl: 1,500 Adv: b/w $800. List Rental $60/M 6X9 Offset 128pp. 30% ads. No Color Magazines. Available on film fiche form.

INTERRACIAL BOOKS FOR CHILDREN BULLETIN. 1967. 8/yr. $16 to individuals; institutions $24. Council on Interracial Books for Children, Inc. 1841 Broadway, NY, NY 10023-7648. ISSN 0020-9708.

LIBRARY JOURNAL. R.R. Bowker, 205 E. 42nd Street, New York, NY 10017 (212) 916-1600. Editor, John N. Berry; Illustration Publisher, Neil Perlman; Production Manager, Jane Perkinson; Advertising Director, Carlton Thiele; Circulation Manager, Joan Roman; Art Director, Gilbert Fletcher. Librarianship in all aspects, dicumentation, information retrieval, education and reviews of books, software, magazines and new products. Book reviews Ind Abs Online: MAG. IN. 0363-0277 1876 SM $64 $3.50 copy. Circulation 25,000 ABC Adv: b w $1,895 8 ½ X 11 Offset 120 pp. 45% ads Color. 4 Mag. Available on film.

SCHOOL LIBRARY JOURNAL. (Junior Libraries) School Library Journal, 249 W. 17th Street, New York, NY 10011 (212) 463-6759. Editor, Lillian Gerhardt; Publisher, Neil Pearlman; Production Manager, Nancy Brown; Advertising Director, Carl Thiele; Circulation Manager, Linda Stugatz; Art Director, Gilbert Fletcher. Information for school and public librarians serving children and young adults. Ind Abs Online: LIB. LIT > 0362-8930 1954 10x year. $54 $5.25 copy. Circulation 41,000 ABC Adv: b w $1,975 8½ X 11 Offset 100pp. 42% ads Color Magazine. Available on film.

British Reviewing Sources

SCHOOL LIBRARIAN. 1937. 4/year. £25 to non-members. School Library Association, Liden Library, Barrington Close, Liden, Swindon SN3 6HF, England. Editor, Joan Murphy. Adv. bk. rev. bibl. index, circulation 4,000 (also available in microfiche) Indexed: Lib. Lit. Bk. Rev. ind. British Education Industry. Childrens Book Review Ind. Childrens Literary Abstract Centre. Pg. Education. Lib. Sci. Abstr. Formerly: School Librarian and School Library Review.

TIMES LITERARY SUPPLEMENT. 1902 w. $80. Times Newspapers Ltd., Priory House, St. John's Lane, London, ECIM 4BX, England. Editor, Jeremy Treglown; adv. bk. review illustration mkt. index, circulation 30,000. (tabloid format; also available in microform from RPI) Indexed: Br. Hum. Ind. Hum. Ind. Bk. Rev. Dig. Child. Bk. Rev. Ind. Gdlns. RILM. RILA. Ref Sour.